

**BRITAIN  
AND  
THE NETHERLANDS**

# BRITAIN AND THE NETHERLANDS

Volume VII

CHURCH AND STATE  
SINCE THE REFORMATION

*PAPERS DELIVERED TO THE  
SEVENTH ANGLO-DUTCH HISTORICAL CONFERENCE*

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## Preface

The theme chosen for the seventh conference of Dutch and British historians – relations between Church and State in the two countries since the Reformation – cannot pretend to any originality. A subject so germane to the history of Europe, and indeed of those parts of the world colonized by Europeans and evangelized by the Christian churches, has naturally attracted the attention of numerous scholars. The particular attraction of this study of the action and reaction of Church and State in Britain and the Netherlands lies in the scope it offers historians and political scientists for making comparisons between two states, both of which endorsed the Protestant Reformation while rejecting absolutism. But the dissimilarities are quite as striking. In the Netherlands the Reformed Church came to hold a curiously equivocal position, being neither an established Church in the English sense nor an independent sect. Yet even after the formal separation of Church and State in 1796 and the rise to political prominence of Dutch Catholicism, ties of sentiment continued to link the Dutch nation and the Reformed Church for some time to come. Within England the Anglican Church maintained its constitutional standing as the established Church and its social position as the Church of the 'Establishment', though it had to recognize a non-episcopal established Church of Scotland and accept its disestablishment in Ireland and Wales. These studies also confirm that even in our secular and pluralist societies the antagonisms between the 'two cities' still leave their impress: in the fairly recent past both Dutch and British governments have learned to tread with circumspection when legislating about religious education and confessional schools.

With the exception of the introductory essay, for which the editors are much obliged to Professor Bornewasser, all the papers presented in this volume were read and discussed at the conference held in September 1979 at Sheffield. On behalf of the participants on that happy

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occasion we warmly thank the Department of History at the University of Sheffield and in particular Professor K. H. D. Haley and dr. Mark Greengrass for the flawless organization. For those of us unfamiliar with Sheffield it was exhilarating to encounter such conspicuous hospitality and civic patriotism. We also wish to express our deep appreciation for generous subventions from the British Academy and the British Council as well as invaluable financial support from Unilever Ltd., C. & A. Modes, Philips Industries and Shell International Petroleum Company Ltd. In an Anglo-Dutch historical venture of this kind, it is a great encouragement to have the support of such distinguished Dutch and Anglo-Dutch concerns. Last, but by no means least, we acknowledge with gratitude a substantial grant from the Prins Bernhardfonds towards the costs of publication.

*April 1981*

*A.C.D.*

*C.A.T.*

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# Relations between Church and State in Britain and the Netherlands: an Introductory Essay

J. A. BORNEWASSER

‘The problem of the relations of Church and State... raises topics which go down to the root of all political philosophy, and forces us to face the whole problem of the true nature of civil society and the meaning of personality’.<sup>1</sup> This judgement, delivered more than seventy-five years ago by the Anglo-Catholic monk and Christian socialist, Neville Figgis, has acquired a new significance in our own day. For a growing number of engagé Christians—theologians, church leaders as well as ordinary believers – the secular implications of membership of a church are a matter of profound concern. Yet, though their vision of the role Christian communities should play within the State may seem novel, they stand in a tradition almost two thousand years old. By their actions they mean to inaugurate a new phase in Church-State relations, which have usually been too cordial and easygoing.

The present collection of papers examines particular periods and facets of this relationship since the end of the middle ages in Britain and the Low Countries. Though the character and intention of the contributions may differ, they are all concerned to place the thought and conduct of the believers within the context of his particular state and society. Some bring new evidence to bear while others are intent on the revision of accepted interpretations: as a result generalities and background information are often taken for granted. Nor is it possible within the compass of this collection to deal adequately with every period. The introductory essay is intended to provide the general reader with some guidance through the difficult terrain explored more fully by the individual contributors.

The ecclesiastical history of Britain, and more particularly England, has since the time of the Reformation moved along quite different lines

<sup>1</sup> J. N. Figgis, *Churches in the modern State* (2nd. edn., London, 1914), p. 170.

from the Continent. The peculiar character of Holland's constitutional progress among other continental countries is no less familiar. In both countries the relationship between Church and State has usually followed a fairly consistent pattern: consequently it has acquired its own special flavour both in Britain and the Netherlands. But a study of the history of Church-State relations in the two countries reveals that they have more in common than their position as outsiders in the European context. Political and religious ideas of a general nature have influenced the whole of European culture and left their abiding mark on both countries. The impact of such developments as the democratization of political institutions, the increasing pluriformity of religious ideas, the gradual loosening of the connexions between Church and State and the secularization of society has been so far-reaching and widely shared that it may be traced in this introductory survey. And even where the differences may seem more evident, the similarities are still sufficiently strong to enable us to draw comparisons by reference to a broader canvas.

## I

From its inception Tudor England bore the hallmarks of the late medieval *Landeskirchentum*. The ideal of medieval Europe, where *sacerdotium* and *imperium* worked harmoniously together under the aegis of the universal spiritual and temporal dominium of the papacy, had long ceased to represent the reality. In response to Boniface VIII's unrealistic claims to sole authority the princes of Christendom, aided by the growing national sentiment, had successfully striven to make good their claims to sovereignty, which included their rights over the national churches. This period witnessed the advent of political Gallicanism in France, the growth of territorial churches among the German princes, who sought thereby to weaken both the authority of the emperor and the papacy, and the first hesitant steps towards the creation of a state church in England. The centrifugal tendencies in medieval Europe were strengthened as the secular powers increasingly discharged responsibilities once considered to belong to the Church. It now became customary for the secular authorities to appoint prelates, to prevent the publication of papal decrees until these had been approved, to oppose the financial claims of the papacy and to supervise parishes, monasteries and ecclesiastical property. But until the Reformation the canon law had been recognized throughout Christendom, at least in principle. Only then

was a new source of ecclesiastical law developed in the churches which had separated from Rome. According as to whether the state inclined to Lutheranism or Calvinism, it was located respectively in the secular or ecclesiastical powers.

At the same time as England was slowly relinquishing its territorial ambitions on the continent, the monarchy was making its authority more effective. In the quasi-absolutist state created by the Tudors the powers in the Christian state and in the vernacular Church gave mutual support to one another. 'The rulers of the English Church were the servants of the English King, and it was because they served the King that they were allowed to rule the Church'.<sup>2</sup> The Statutes of Praemunire, passed in the fourteenth century, represent a significant stage in a long series of measures designed to abridge papal jurisdiction. Still no one, apart from Wyclif and his adepts, then seriously considered repudiating the supreme spiritual authority of the papacy. As late as 1518 Cardinal Wolsey, already archbishop of York and Lord Chancellor, was appointed legate *a latere* with the approval of Henry VIII: as such Thomas Wolsey personified the indivisibility of the English Church. At the same time it was evident from his triple function that ecclesiastical jurisdiction was passing into the hands of the King. Within the Church there also persisted a centuries-old anticlerical tradition. It was nourished by the wealth of the religious houses and the avarice of many clerics. In some parts of England the anticlerical temper was strengthened by Lollardy. This underground movement, which had been condemned in the early fifteenth century as heretical, survived despite the united efforts of the ecclesiastical and secular authorities to extinguish it.

In this context the canonical quarrel in which the King found himself at odds with the papacy helped to transform relations between the Church and the Crown in England, though the extent of the change was not immediately evident. But there could be no doubt about one matter: henceforth the King would tolerate no form of foreign jurisdiction over the English Church. When Henry VIII declared himself in 1534 to be 'the only Protector and Supreme Head of the Church and clergy of England', the King-in-Parliament achieved at a stroke the same mastery over the Church that he and his predecessors had gradually gained in constitutional and cultural affairs. By the dissolution of the monasteries the King gave satisfaction to the exchequer, to the land-hungry aristocracy, to the bishops who disliked the immunities enjoyed by the regular clergy and to the anticlerical sections of the population. The Church which had sub-

<sup>2</sup> S. T. Bindoff, *Tudor England* (Harmondsworth, 1961), p. 81.

mitted to the royal will developed, under the influence of the Protestant reformers, during the sixteenth century into a unique kind of Christian community, remarkable above all for its ostensible uniformity and its internal comprehensiveness.

The metamorphosis of the *ecclesia anglicana* of old into the established Anglican Church was the special creation of Elizabeth and the theologians active in her reign. Whitgift, Jewel and Hooker together furnished a defence of the Elizabethan Church settlement which was underpinned by the enforcement of a single Book of Common Prayer and subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. The ecclesiastical authorities were also convinced that the church order had received its essential character from the state, though its constitution was not formally laid down in statute law. When therefore in 1603, the year of the Queen's death, the Canons referred officially for the first time to 'the Church of England by law established', this was taken for granted. Englishmen in Elizabeth's reign thought of themselves as belonging to a single body, comprising both the secular and spiritual spheres, 'which might be called indifferently a state-church or a church-state'.<sup>3</sup> Whitgift made the same point when during his defence of the ecclesiastical regulations of the Queen, he remarked 'I make no difference betwixt a Christian commonwealth and the Church of Christ'.<sup>4</sup>

The Elizabethan Settlement was conceived in order to ensure the highest degree of harmony between Church and State. Nor should this cause us any surprise for the reform of the English Church had been undertaken in the interests of the State. It was axiomatic that all the Queen's subjects should attend the services of the English Church. In order not to cause needless offence many of the religious and doctrinal issues raised by the continental Reformation were stated in the most general terms. The compromise so reached is exemplified by the new Church's liturgy. As prescribed by the Elizabethan Prayer Book of 1559 it bore a striking resemblance to the medieval rite, though its doctrine was clearly inspired by the Reformation. The greatest exponent of Anglicanism as the *via media* was, of course, Richard Hooker. Speaking as it were for the new establishment, he urged the Church to pursue a middle course between Catholic conservatism and the Puritan appetite for radical reform. As Claire Cross shows in the opening essay, this is why the advocates of an avowedly

<sup>3</sup> A. F. Pollard, *The History of England. A Study in Political Evolution* (London, 1927), p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> Cited by Helmut Kressner, *Schweizer Ursprünge des anglikanischen Staatskirchentums* (Gütersloh, 1953), p. 100.

Protestant reform made such slow progress. Her paper also reveals how nevertheless in England, as earlier on the continent, the religious complexion of the individual towns was largely determined by local personalities and social and political structures, which varied widely from region to region. Because of the presence of a covert Protestant undercurrent, which could draw to some extent on an earlier Lollard tradition, the Church here and there took on a more decidedly Protestant character than the Supreme Governor would have wished. Nevertheless the Queen did succeed in keeping the more extreme forms of Puritanism at bay.

At the eve of the Reformation the Low Countries also showed signs of developing a territorial church. Already in the second half of the fifteenth century the Burgundian dukes had gone some way towards achieving closer ties between the episcopate and the ruling dynasty. Their desire to make a single ecclesiastical province of their expanding possessions matched their endeavours to centralize and integrate the state, the various provinces of which had been brought together as a result of a laborious process of expansion. When Charles V succeeded in 1515 to the government of the Low Countries, he set about trying to re-organize the dioceses in an endeavour to withdraw his territories from the jurisdiction of such foreign prince-bishoprics as Liège, Cologne and Münster. The transfer of the temporal authority of the bishop of Utrecht to the ruler of the Habsburg-Burgundian lands in 1528 represents another expression of this policy. When eventually his son Philip II succeeded in carrying through the drastic reorganization of the dioceses in 1559, the caesaropapist ambitions of the secular prince were largely realized. The papacy, properly convinced of Philip's commitment to the crusade against heresy, was compelled to yield. From this perspective the Habsburg rulers of the Low Countries stood, at least in principle, in much the same relationship to the territorial church as the Tudors did in respect of the English Church. Their ideal has been aptly described in the following terms: 'The Church should be closely associated with the civil polity, religion should become a matter for government concern and the bishops should act as senior administrators in the Church, appointed, instructed, censured and, if necessary, dismissed by the prince'.<sup>5</sup> As in Elizabethan England, the civil and religious communities should be identical, though of course in the Low Countries the religious aims were those of the universal Roman Catholic Church. But precisely

<sup>5</sup> L. J. Rogier, *Geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16de en 17de eeuw* (2nd. edn., 3 vol., Amsterdam, 1947), I, 191.

this endeavour to centralize and unite Church and State was to prove only a few years later one of the principal causes of the Dutch Revolt. Eventually this gave rise to the United Provinces in which relations between Church and State were on a quite different footing because there was no medieval precedent for the constitutional position post-1579 and above all for the new church.

Unlike Tudor England the 'seventeen Netherlands' never coalesced into a national community under the Habsburgs. Moreover Charles V's vain pursuit of hegemony in Christendom often ran counter to the interests of his Habsburg-Burgundian possessions, which later suffered from Philip II's preoccupation with the Spanish kingdoms. The strains between the separate provinces, especially between the older patrimonial provinces and those incorporated by Charles V, were considerable. The more thoroughly urbanized regions were difficult to govern on account of their divergent interests and pressure groups. The various movements demanding religious reform were assisted by social and economic grievances. These could also exploit a longstanding vein of anticlerical sentiment, which had left a legacy of bitterness towards the institutions of the Church, much as Lollardy had done in some parts of England. From the outset the advocates of doctrinal reform were bitterly opposed by the central government. The inquisitors appointed by the state acted still more forcefully than their ecclesiastical namesakes and Church and State joined forces to quell any disturbance of public order provoked by religious passions. 'What might have provided a safety-valve became instead one more reason for discontent with the established regime'.<sup>6</sup>

In a bid to mitigate this resentment the town magistrates did not always enforce to the letter the repressive edicts against those known collectively, though misleadingly, as *lutherianen*. The quandary in which the local authorities found themselves appears from the contribution of Alastair Duke. If the edicts of the central government were too rigorously enforced, there was a risk that the *stadsvrede*, that is the harmony within the walls, might suffer. When memories of Münster (1534-5) had faded, the heretics no longer appeared to the town governments, preoccupied as ever with keeping control, to threaten the social and political order and this relaxation enabled Reformed Protestantism to make headway. This seems to have been the case in certain towns in Flanders and Brabant where the new doctrines were given a sympathetic hearing by the well-to-do, even though they did not necessarily abjure their Roman faith. In the French-speaking

<sup>6</sup> *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (ed. D. P. Blok, W. Prevenier *et al.*, 15 vol., Haarlem 1977-), V 491.

towns of Tournai and Valenciennes the commercial and political interests of the community, which sometimes involved the defence of ancient urban privileges against the central government, were responsible for the toleration locally of Calvinism. This politicization seems to have been one of the conditions for the success of the urban Reformation. Protestantism could only develop in defiance of the State and survive 'under the cross' when it enjoyed a measure of support, covert or open, from the local authorities. Several decades behind England, certain German principalities and the Scandinavian countries, the politicization of the Reformation on much larger scale, still in the face of opposition from the central government, enabled the Reformed Churches eventually to triumph in the northern Netherlands.

The relationship between Church and State in the Dutch Republic of the Seven Provinces (1588-1795) was quite unlike that found in England: the new state and the new church, which enjoyed an exclusive position in it, were both the laborious outcome of a revolt against the central government. The Dutch Republic could not but be deeply affected by the conservative and particularist resistance mounted against the Habsburg-Burgundian unitary state which had been in the making. The Republic remained an alliance of tiny states and in some provinces the towns, in their turn, contended for power. And if Calvinism had been the inspiration of the Revolt, it did not follow that the civil authorities enthusiastically embraced the new doctrines. In their desire to recover their traditional independence, which had been wrested from them by the central government, the town magistrates had often taken the side of revolution for non-religious reasons. The Dutch Republic was only converted, against the wishes of many moderates, into a Calvinist federation by the determination of a small minority, who were bent on a policy of Calvinist protestantization. In this they were assisted by the still widespread conviction that religious uniformity served the best interests of the State. The reluctant acceptance of Calvinism explains why relations between the secular authorities in the towns and provinces and the leaders of the Reformed Church remained cool.

The development from below also had consequences for the organization of the Church. In vain it strove after a general synod which would begin by devising an autonomous and anti-erastian church order valid for all the provinces. The presbyterian polity of the Church also obstructed the formation of a uniform and strong-minded leadership whose orthodoxy was beyond reproach. In its organization the Church resembled a pyramid, beginning with the consistories and ascending through the *classes* (presbyteries) to the

synods; of these the regional *classes* were the most important. Recently the Church in the province of Holland has been defined as 'an aggregation of associations based on the *classis*'.<sup>7</sup> As the only officially recognized and privileged Church, it often demanded more support in the individual towns and provinces than the civil authorities, who were everywhere inclined to be more or less tolerant, were prepared to give. Eventually the several different church orders were indeed aligned when in 1619 an orthodox Calvinist church order was laid down for the Dutch Republic at the synod of Dordrecht, but in most provinces this constitution of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands failed to gain recognition from the civil authorities.

There could then be no question in the Republic of a uniform relationship between the State and an 'Established' Church. The Christian humanist, or as some might say, Erasmian, tradition of moderation and freedom had so greatly affected the governing classes that the aloofness we have already had occasion to observe between the regents and the ecclesiastical authorities was reinforced after the Revolt by differences of outlook. Increasingly, too, the social and economic concerns of the new Republic obliged its statesmen to pursue policies which distinguished between the secular interests of the State and the narrow interests of the Church. The various provincial authorities never identified their subjects with the members of the Reformed Church. For this reason it has been claimed that, in comparison to other Protestant countries including England, an 'entirely new relationship' existed between Church and State in the Dutch Republic.<sup>8</sup> It must however remain a moot point whether the theoretical significance of this relationship was not gravely prejudiced by the continuing ban on the public worship of Catholics and dissenters and the persecutions from which especially the Catholics, who held clandestine services, periodically suffered. Nevertheless, in the course of time the attitude of the civil authorities in the Dutch Republic towards dissenters of all sorts gradually softened.

In the sixteenth century neither England nor the Netherlands was ready for toleration in the sense of religious freedom. The limitations of toleration in this period are implicitly raised by Nicolette Mout who examines the ideas and vicissitudes of the Family of Love. Despite a proclamation issued in 1580 by Elizabeth against the sect, it

<sup>7</sup> A. T. van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen. Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> H. A. Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid. Een verhandeling over de verhouding van Kerk en Staat in de Republiek ...gedurende de zeventiende eeuw* (Groningen, 1972), pp. 2, 5.

continued to exert a modest influence in England until the second half of the seventeenth century. In Holland, however, the sect seems to have faded away in the early days of the Republic, at a time when the Calvinists, who were intent on the protestantization of the country, felt particularly confident. Moreover, it is not always easy to reconcile the eschatological, sometimes even chiliastic, concerns of the Familists with the stress they placed on reconciliation and a policy of *Religionsfriede*. In the 1570s and early 1580s, until the assassination in 1584 of the moderate leader of the Revolt, William of Orange, there were many who like the Familists wished to ensure that the Revolt did not issue in a Calvinist state: they may not unfairly be compared with the *politiques* in France. But in an age when the maxim *cuius regio, eius et religio* was observed throughout Europe, such considerations could not prevail.

Nevertheless the religious settlement achieved in the seventeenth century, the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic, was a compromise from beginning to end. It only partly reflected the wishes of the secular authorities, above all of the regents. These would have preferred a comprehensive Church capable, after the English model, of ministering to the whole population, or at least all those who were not of the Roman persuasion. Some ministers too, who shared the outlook of the regents found the restrictions within the Reformed Church too irksome. These became known as the Remonstrants (on account of the Remonstrance they presented in 1610 to the States of Holland) or Arminians (after the Leiden divine Arminius whose theology was considered heterodox) and they were driven from the public Church. But the Remonstrant *Broederschap* (Fraternity), formed by those who had been expelled, had no great difficulty in surviving, albeit out of the public eye, for the provincial authorities showed little enthusiasm in the discharge of their formal obligation to maintain the 'true Reformed religion'.

The lukewarm response of the civil powers remained a constant source of irritation to most leading churchmen. As the heirs of Calvin's theocratic vision they criticized the conduct of the regents for being, in some respects, too lax and, in others, too meddling and erastian. The most vehement among the ministers looked on Holland as the New Jerusalem, its eyes fixed on the radiance of Mount Zion. They dreamt of a Dutch Israel, where ecclesiastical and civil authorities would together rule God's chosen people in accordance with the judgment of the former. Their frustration, when these hopes remained unfulfilled, is the theme of Gerrit Groenhuis' contribution. The theocratic construction placed by such ministers on the laws of the Church and civil society recalls the outlook of Puritan presbyterians

in Great Britain. But in contrast to these kindred spirits the Dutch *dominees* reluctantly resigned themselves to the existing public Church, which under the influence of the representatives of the civil authorities took on increasingly the character of a comprehensive national Church. The theocracy, once so ardently sought by many Dutch Calvinists, withered until what remained, as one writer sadly observed, was 'part caricature... part wishful thinking and nostalgia'.<sup>9</sup>

After Elizabeth's death it required the best endeavours of the Stuarts to prevent the national Church from steering a Puritan course. In this they were assisted by their absolutist ambitions, but by the same token these only served to sharpen the conflicts between on the one hand the Crown and the Church and on the other Parliament and the Puritans. James I's dictum 'No bishop, no king' epitomized his authoritarian ecclesiastical machine and the notion of the royal supremacy gained a fresh dimension with his doctrine of the divine right of kings. Parliament became the channel for all manner of grievances. Discontent about the Common Law and the Bible as well as encroachments on regional and religious liberties merged in a politico-religious conflict which was to be complicated by social dissension and intellectual controversies. With the execution of Laud in 1645 and the King four years later, royal absolutism, rank episcopalianism, erastianism and Arminianism, with its Dutch associations, went down to defeat together. Both the Crown and the Church suffered at the hands of Cromwell and it was only when the Crown was restored in 1660 that the Church recovered its established position.

Arminianism played a prominent part in the abortive attempts made during Charles I's reign to fend off Puritan Calvinism. This appears from Nicholas Tyacke's examination of the cultural and intellectual ethos of the period and the deeper significance of Arminianism which then found favour at Court. Far from seeking a rapprochement with Rome, Charles and Laud used Arminianism as a means of defending the comprehensive nature of the Church against the diehard Calvinist predestinarians and preserving it in peace and quiet. The fact that Laud's conduct had quite the opposite effect should not deceive us as to his original intention. Arminianism with its insistence on free will became the religious ally of English *libertinage*, itself derived from the scepticism, which had been gaining ground since the sixteenth century. The Caroline Court before the outbreak of the civil wars was the focus of a remarkably versatile culture, one aspect

<sup>9</sup> S. van der Linde, 'De twee gestalten van het Rijk: de verhouding Kerk-Staat' in *Woord en werkelijkheid* (Nijkerk, 1973), p. 96.

of which presented a secular world-picture. This attempted to reconcile the claims of theology and the natural sciences by recognizing the autonomy of each discipline in its own sphere. In the seventeenth century many Christians outside the Puritan tradition were conscious of living 'in divided and distinguished worlds'.<sup>10</sup>

## II

Any review of relations between Church and State in the Netherlands and England during the last three centuries, which looks for a cohesive pattern, encounters several problems. We have already observed how the dissimilar history of previous Church-State relations in the two countries was of crucial importance. But the pace of change also differed considerably. In the Netherlands nothing altered in principle, and little indeed in practice, until the downfall of the Republic. Conversely, the Revolution of 1795, bloodless though it was, had such far-reaching consequences, that many of the results were only gradually perceived in the course of the following century. Great Britain never experienced so drastic a breach with the past. True, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 did not leave relations between Church and State unscathed, but this represented only the first milestone on a long road that was to be followed for another two centuries or more, during which there were to be other interruptions and diversions. The quite exceptional development of the Dutch polity and form of government – modern parliamentary monarchy in the Netherlands owed its emergence to a retarded form of enlightened absolutism – gave a special twist to Church-State relations. On the other hand Great Britain evolved a democratic society more gradually than any other major European state. Finally, we should remember that even now Church-State relations in the two countries are very different. Recently an oecumenically-minded historian from England could remark of his own country: 'The Establishment of the Church has also continued to the present time with very little movement of public opinion about it'.<sup>11</sup> By contrast in the Netherlands, where the separation of Church and State is almost complete, denominational schools, which make up two-thirds of all forms of education, are paid for in full by the Treasury.

<sup>10</sup> W. J. Bouwsma, 'The Secularization of Society in the Seventeenth Century', in *XIII International Congress of Historical Sciences. Moscow 1970* (Moscow, 1973), p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> E. R. Norman, *Church and Society in England 1770-1970. A Historical Study* (Oxford, 1976), p. 453.

Yet, despite all these differences, important resemblances may also be detected. These may be traced back to certain general trends which, for all the dissimilarities between themselves, have become more marked, when viewed in the longer term. One thinks here of the increasing comprehensiveness of the long established or privileged Church, which in turn has led to the more orthodox churches or sects splitting off. Furthermore, the secularization of society and the evolution of more democratic forms of constitution should be borne in mind; these developments allowed the civil authorities to regard dissidents with more indulgence and tolerance.

But change in one direction often seems to impede movement in another. For example, when the State cultivated a comprehensive Christianity, which demanded nothing more in the way of allegiance than was consonant with 'common sense' and utility, it hoped to preserve an existing religious pluriformity and prevent the formation of separate churches. But in eighteenth-century England this concern of the State stimulated Wesley's remarkable revival, which issued in the dissenting Methodist societies. Likewise in the Netherlands the Churches of the *Afgescheidenen* (Separatists) and the *Gereformeerden* (Orthodox Calvinists), which broke away in the nineteenth century, bear witness to a reaction against a parent body, which had grown too latitudinarian. Because England early exchanged an absolute for a constitutional monarchy, the state has been honoured as a political democracy, but since this also involved the suspension of Convocation, the spiritual parliament of the Established Church, the Anglican Church became little more than a department of state under the control of Parliament. Moreover, during the eighteenth century the House of Commons was transformed into an increasingly non-conformist, or even secular body. On that account the period has been aptly described as 'Erastianism Triumphant'.<sup>12</sup> This was the result of the Union of Parliaments (1707), the acts of indemnity passed regularly after 1727 to permit dissenters to sit in the House, the growth of rationalism and the adoption of a more secular outlook by the upper classes. In the Netherlands however the drift towards secularization was unexpectedly checked when the franchise was extended and religious toleration entrenched in the constitution. This is borne out by the formation in the late nineteenth century of political parties along confessional lines and the consequent 'confessionalization' of national politics. Common patterns in history only emerge when we stand well back from the canvas. It is these long-term

<sup>12</sup> C. F. Garbett, *Church and State in England* (London, 1950), p. 86.

shifts which provide the substance of the remaining essays, though some of the authors prefer to treat them more obliquely.

Dr. Roorda shows how in the period between the Glorious Revolution and the Hanoverian Succession opinion moved towards both 'comprehension' and 'toleration', though in fact these two solutions to the problem of relations between Church and State proved difficult to harmonize. In England the Toleration Act (1689) gave some slight measure of recognition to Dissenters, among whom the Presbyterians figured most prominently. When 'comprehension' failed because it called for too many concessions on the part of the majority within the Restoration Church, which epitomized 'Old England', it brought perhaps unwittingly though no less assuredly, the heady prospect of the triumph of 'toleration'. Assisted by the Whigs, the Dissenters were to become as the Free Churches an enduring feature of English church life and, in the longer term, they were to prove a salutary stimulus to the Anglican Church as it sought ways of easing the burden of the erastian yoke. Conversely, the Episcopalians in Scotland were granted certain rights alongside the ruling 'Kirk by law established'. In Great Britain Dissent was given at a relatively early date legal recognition: dissenting bodies were regarded as civil corporations and given subsidies by the State. English nonconformity in the eighteenth century with its vigorous activities and types of organization contained the seeds of religious and social emancipation which germinated in the following century.

In the Dutch Republic the privileged Reformed Church enjoyed more autonomy than either of the two established Churches in Great Britain. Even so the provincial authorities contrived to give it a comprehensive character so that both pietist and rationalist traditions were contained within the Presbyterian Church. Moreover, many of the dissenters, especially Remonstrants, who had been barred in practice from holding public office, took a leading part in the economic and cultural life of the Republic. Nevertheless, the public authorities stopped short of granting them legal recognition. The States General did however take sides in the quarrel within the Roman Catholic 'mission Church' which was to lead to the so-called Utrecht Schism. This intervention by the State, when taken together with the long-standing practice whereby the local authorities would connive at clandestine Catholic churches in return for money, demonstrates that the juridical monopoly of the Reformed Church was in fact fictitious and evidently so regarded by the civil powers. In the Netherlands too, the dissenters helped to prepare the way for the forces of emancipation, which were to triumph so abruptly in 1795 with French support.

In my own contribution I have been concerned to indicate to what extent relations between Church and State in the first half of the nineteenth century were altered by the Revolution of 1795. In no time the principles which animated the French Revolution were put into effect in the Batavian Republic. This implied first and foremost that there should be complete equality between all the churches now officially called *kerkgenootschappen* (religious denominations). Though none of the quick succession of constitutions tampered with this principle of equality, the idea of freedom, which had been initially defended no less fervently, proved more difficult. Under French pressure the new unitary state shared in an autocratic development which was typical of a Napoleonic régime. When William I (1813-40) succeeded as the first national monarch in place of the dispossessed foreign power, he still followed closely in many respects the policies of his Bonapartist predecessor, Louis Napoleon, whom the French emperor had appointed to keep watch over the region at the mouths of the great rivers.

Under the first scion of the house of Orange to rule as king, the erstwhile privileged Church soon emerged in a plainly erastian guise. The Kingdom of the Netherlands was, after all, to have its own modest established Church. But the social and cultural context surrounding this *kerkgenootschap* was utterly unlike that prevailing when the two established Churches of Great Britain had come into being. This is for example obvious from the organization of the small Lutheran Church along broadly similar lines to the Reformed Church. And the Catholics only escaped the establishment of an analogous national Roman Catholic Church because they could count in their campaign of opposition on the papacy. Not until William I abdicated did the Reformed Church succeed in breaking free of government control, but by then the divisions between the various schools of thought within the Church had grown so deep that it presented a pluralist impression. Alongside, Catholicism benefited from the spirit of freedom which finally prevailed in the liberal constitution of 1848. In the Netherlands the more democratic the State had become, the more complete was the separation between Church and State.

The advancing secularization of the Dutch state provides the point of departure for the essay of Jan Bank in which he examines the next phase in the interaction of Church and State. In his view the chief reason for the so-called *verzuiling* (denominational segregation) of Dutch political life, paradoxical though it may seem, lies in the insistence of liberals that the state alone should control the schools paid for by the government. The formation of the Anti-Revolutio-

nary political party, which abhorred the democratic constitutional state as the offspring of the godless French Revolution, was intended to call a halt to the impending secularization of society. Evoking the principle of *souvereiniteit in eigen kring* (sovereignty in one's own sphere) the 'Anti's' built up a network of political, social and educational organizations with a manifestly Calvinist stamp. Their example was followed by the Roman Catholics who made up roughly one-third of the Dutch nation. Despite their dissimilar ways of thinking and their tradition of religious animosity, the leaders of these two groups succeeded in forming a political coalition which dominated Dutch society during the first decades of the present century. While keeping the centripetal tendencies of the State in check, they created in this way a social structure that formed the link between their autonomous denominations and their national policies which were confessionally informed. The separation of Church and State might have been accomplished long ago, but some denominations were once again becoming more closely involved in society. The autonomy of the subcultures within a plural society guaranteed that an equilibrium would be maintained between the political parties, but this nevertheless worked particularly to the advantage of the Catholic population, which was then in the process of emancipation.

After the Second World War the Catholics entered into a 'secularized' political alliance with the third *zuil* in Dutch society, namely the Socialists who had by this time disengaged from Marxism. For the time being Dutch Catholicism remained as vigorous and cohesive a force as ever. Moreover it virtually overcame its age-old social and cultural backwardness, thanks to its organizational isolation. Yet concurrently within the Catholic *zuil* there was a parallel movement of emancipation on the part of the laity against the clergy and this, combined with the arrival of the welfare state as a result of the second industrial revolution provided – in the view of Bank – 'a confessional road to secularization'. In other words, the Catholic *zuil* became the unwitting victim of its own success. It is even open to doubt whether Dutch Catholicism will preserve anything of its own identity, or whether it will be lost in 'a secularized or rather secularist view of humanity and society'.<sup>13</sup>

These problems which also beset, though in a lesser degree, the declining orthodox Calvinist section of the nation, have had some unexpected consequences for relations between Church and State at the present time. Since the State supports the democratic right of

<sup>13</sup> J. M. G. Thurlings, *De wankele zuil. Nederlandse katholieken tussen assimilatie en pluralisme* (Nijmegen and Amersfoort, 1971), p. 207.

parents to have a say in the education of their children, a controversy recently arose on the question whether the governors of confessional schools were bound to admit this parental right. The growing modernism and pluriformity found within all the major Churches, including the Roman Catholic and orthodox Calvinist confessions, may herald the demise of the *verzuijing* of society which the State had come to accept. Yet such a development should not be simply equated with the 'privatization of religion'. In the Netherlands growing numbers of oecumenically-disposed and politically progressive Christians have become critical of the 'establishment' in both the State and the Churches. But these developments have occurred too recently for their consequences to have been discussed by the historians gathered at Sheffield.

The main difference between the situations in which Britain and the Netherlands found themselves arose from their initially dissimilar responses to the French Revolution. Politicians and church leaders in Britain were convinced that France had sealed its own destiny when violent hands were laid on the Church. In 1790 the Prime Minister, William Pitt, considered 'the Church of England, as by law established, to be so essential a part of the Constitution, that whatever endangered it, would necessarily affect the security of the whole'.<sup>14</sup> In the same year Burke set before Europe his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, which was soon hailed as the classic statement of the reasons for opposing the Revolution. For this reason Dutch readers will regret that the remaining contributions on England in this collection of essays do not directly address themselves to relations between Church and State, the more so since their interpenetration, though now much attenuated, still strikes the continental observer as curiously anachronistic.

Of course important changes have taken place since Pitt delivered his now famous and oft-repeated judgment. In 1829, only a year after the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts had made the Dissenters full-fledged citizens, the principles of toleration were extended by virtue of the Catholic Emancipation Act. Puritanism and Popery, which had for so long appeared to threaten the Established Church, benefited at last from a process of change that was already under way in the Age of Reason. With the passage of the Reform Bill a period was ushered in during which the ties between Church and State were gradually loosened.

As a result the Church of England acquired certain of the character-

<sup>14</sup> Cited by Norman, *Church and Society*, p. 19.

istics inherent in a denomination. After an evangelical revival in the eighteenth century and then the Oxford Movement, the Anglican Church struggled to assert its identity, which was threatened by comprehension. Gradually the Church achieved a greater measure of independence as was evident when in the mid-nineteenth century Convocation, which had not been summoned for two hundred years, was again called into being. In the early years of the present century the Church Assembly, a sort of Parliament of Anglicans, was set up: this reflected a greater degree of democracy in the government of the Church and a larger measure of independence vis-à-vis the State. From this time the effective conduct of ecclesiastical affairs has been carried on by these two bodies, i.e. by the bishops, clergy and laity of the Church of England. Though their measures still require parliamentary approval, this means little in practice. The rejection by the House of Commons of a revised Prayer Book in 1928, inspired largely by the eloquence of a Scottish *Presbyterian* member of parliament, was anomalous and had little practical effect: the clergy simply went their own way. Much the same could be said of the Crown's continuing role in appointments to ecclesiastical offices. Political considerations rarely determine the choice of bishops and in practice the two archbishops exercise the power of veto. The time when the Church could be represented as 'the Tory party at prayer' is long past, if it were ever true, in the same way as the 'Nonconformist conscience' can no longer be closely identified with the Liberals. Virtually all the commissions which have been vainly preoccupied with relations between Church and State for the past hundred years would endorse the conclusion 'that although the present system is hardly defensible in theory it works well in practice'.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless the relations between Church and State are still not without their occasional strains: the man recently appointed as the new bishop of London was evidently not the choice of the Church of England while the controversial Alternative Servicebook has been the target of impassioned parliamentary criticism. Even so the classic Nonconformist demand for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England is rarely heard nowadays.

This may be explained by the fact that as the State becomes more secular in outlook, Hooker's model of a single Christian polity has seemed increasingly remote. It finds expression in the divergence between the canon law of the Established Church and the civil law in many spheres. These include matrimony, the abolition of the com-

<sup>15</sup> D. Nicholls, *Church and State in Britain since 1820* (London and New York, 1967), p. 6.

pulsory church rate, the University Test Act, which removed the requirement that the holders of university offices (except the Regius chairs of Divinity) should be Anglicans and the decision to permit Nonconformists to be buried according to their own rites in parochial churchyards. All this nineteenth-century legislation proceeded from the principle that the State should no longer exclusively protect the Church of England, though at the same time this recognition of religious diversity did not mean that the ideal of a national and comprehensive profession of the Christian faith had been finally abandoned.

This is admirably brought out by the legislation on education, which also enables us to see how, despite the common need for pluriformity, the developments in England and the Netherlands were in fact running counter to one another. Whereas in the Netherlands the separation of Church and State gave rise to confessional schools which were fully subsidized by the State, in England Board Schools were created after 1870 alongside Church Schools. Only undenominational religious teaching consonant with a 'common Christianity' was permitted in schools founded by the local boards. All schools in receipt of public funds, whether Church or Board, were required to implement the 'conscience clause', allowing parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction. The subsequent controversy concerning the principle of denominational schools between Anglicans, who favoured them, and Nonconformists, who opposed them, was not settled until the Second World War. The solution was one that still strikes Dutchmen, accustomed to living in a confessionally segmented society, as extraordinary. The Education Act of 1944 perpetuated the dual system of State schools and Church schools, all of which were subsidized by the State in varying degrees. But in the Church schools most heavily dependent on the State for subsidies, as well as in the State schools themselves, undenominational religious instruction and acts of worship were laid down, though of course the usual conscience clauses were retained. In this compromise the traditional desire for comprehensiveness carried the day: in this way it was hoped to prevent too drastic a secularization of the State. As Spencer Leeson (later the Bishop of Peterborough) declared in 1944: 'Parliament has declared by and through this requirement the will of the nation that it shall be a Christian Nation'.<sup>16</sup>

This thoroughly English solution to what is widely considered the most ticklish problem in relations between Church and State was made possible as a result of a rapprochement between Anglicans and

<sup>16</sup> Cited by Norman, *Church and Society*, p. 403.

Free Churchmen. Large numbers of Nonconformists – including also Methodists who made up almost half of these – had become convinced that there was, after all, some value in the public acknowledgment of Christ's claim over the national life. Certainly the English religious tradition has been profoundly affected by the social and cultural changes undergone by the Free Churches. According to one of their historians, the Free Churches are as 'English' as the Church of England herself and he went on to observe that continental observers were inclined to give too much attention to the parish church and to neglect the nonconformist chapel.<sup>17</sup>

Clyde Binfield has turned his attention towards what he calls the 'internal logic' of the Free Churches as well as to those external political and cultural developments that had left their mark on these denominations. In the late nineteenth century Congregationalists particularly seem to have acquired a renewed awareness of the Catholic dimension of their churchmanship. This may be ascribed in the first place to a religious shift within Congregationalism itself, away from Independency, with its roots in Puritanism, towards a deeper appreciation of the Church Universal, which was inspired by the vision of primary Christianity. But this change of emphasis also owed much to the willingness of Congregationalists to widen their aesthetic categories, a change that was all the more remarkable because it occurred in one of those branches of the Christian Church which had not been notable for its contribution to literature or the arts. According to Binfield an increasing number of Free Churches were making very conscious use of colour, texture and drama, in their buildings as well as in their worship. Changes in society were also responsible for bringing larger numbers of Free Churchmen back into the mainstream of national life. A measure of cultural integration was taking place, which, despite the obvious differences arising from venerable traditions, made the distinctive subcultures seem less peripheral. Oecumenical voices could be heard emphasizing their common links with Christians throughout Europe: after all believers of every denomination could understand the meaning of *Jesus Hominum Salvator*.

The attitude prevailing in the Irish outpost of the United Kingdom, where in the very same period Christians fought one another, could scarcely have been more different. The features common to the development of Church-State relations in both Great Britain and the Netherlands are conspicuously absent in Patrick Buckland's concluding essay on Northern Ireland between the wars. Apparently those

<sup>17</sup> F. A. Payne, *The Free Church Tradition in the Life of England* (3rd. edn., London, 1951), p. 19.

historically-determined and longstanding conflicts between Protestants and Catholics have not been mitigated by the advance of democracy, toleration and secularization, phenomena whose conciliatory influence have been felt elsewhere. Instead the Protestant State practised religious discrimination, the Catholics saw the legislation on schools as a violation of their freedom of conscience, while the predominantly Presbyterian Protestants shuddered with horror at ultramontane Catholicism, which they regarded as a 'religio-political system for the enslavement of the body and the soul of man'. Finally the divisions among the Protestants were only aggravated by the rigidity of the political discord between Unionism and Nationalism: 'religion as well as history divided Ulstermen.' In Patrick Buckland's view this all followed inevitably, once the mistaken decision had been taken to establish a separate government in Northern Ireland instead of continuing direct British rule over the province: Ulster society was too small and too deeply riven to be self-governing. Sadly the period of troubles which broke out in the late 1960s and led eventually to the abandonment of the province's controversial autonomy has not yet ended. The prospects for a new and constructive relationship between Church and State in Northern Ireland are not therefore very encouraging.

By way of a conclusion let us return to those Christians, referred to at the start of this introductory essay, who believe that the Churches should support activities 'against all establishments, civil and religious'.<sup>18</sup> Since the second half of the 1960s there have appeared in both the Netherlands and England politically-committed Christian radicals, who have espoused a 'political theology'. Influenced by the ideas of the New Left and Neo-Marxism, they consider all those in authority in State and Church to be more or less covert perpetrators of injustice and tyranny. Such establishments deserve in their view to be exposed, if need be by political acts and rebellion. But in England these endeavours to give the Gospel a political and socialist content have met with more resistance within the Churches than in the Netherlands. Many conservative Christians are fearful lest there will be a recurrence of the old political conflict between the *sacerdotium* and the *imperium*, the only difference being that both sides will don modern democratic dress. But no one would surely deny that any Christian community has, willy-nilly, political and social implications. In a pluriform and largely secular society the Christian Churches will continue to seek ways of faithfully discharging the

<sup>18</sup> Cited by Norman, *Church and Society*, p. 465.

commission entrusted to them by Him from whom they take their name. In this sense the history of Church-State relations continues to pursue its inevitable and irresistible course.

# 1. The State and Development of Protestantism in English Towns, 1520-1603

C. CROSS

PERHAPS the most immediately obvious difference between the dissemination of Protestantism in England and the Netherlands in the sixteenth century lies in the official nature of the English Reformation compared with the much more spontaneous growth of Protestantism in the Netherlands. In the reign of Henry VIII England's separation from Rome took place through the action of the Crown-in-Parliament. Under Edward VI by act of parliament it formally became a Protestant nation, and yet again, after the Catholic restoration of Mary, Protestantism was re-established by act of parliament in 1559. Yet the contrast between the development of Protestantism in England and parts of the Low Countries may not have been as absolute as this juxtaposition might suggest. With the publication of an increasing number of local studies on the assimilation of Protestantism in England together with some very recent synthesizing articles it is more and more becoming clear that in England also the emergence of an active commitment to Protestantism frequently depended upon what can best be described as unofficial, local initiatives and not upon direct state sponsorship. Particularly in the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I when the monarch's theological inclinations often moved in an opposite direction from those of their most fervent Protestant subjects the propagation of Protestantism had to be something of a semi-clandestine operation. A consideration of the ways in which Protestantism of a more advanced kind than that sanctioned by the crown came to be accepted in certain English towns may serve to highlight the resemblances as well as the divergences in the spread of Protestantism in England and the Netherlands.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. M. Palliser, 'Popular Reactions to the Reformation during the Years of Uncertainty 1530-70' and W. J. Sheils, 'Religion in Provincial Towns: Innovation and Tradition', in *Church and Society in England: Henry VIII to James I* (ed. F. Heal and R. O'Day, London, 1977), pp. 35-56 and 156-76; P. Clark and P. Slack, 'Introduction', in *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700* (ed. *idem*, London, 1972), pp. 1-56.

Historians have long been accustomed to refer to the English Reformation as an 'act of state', and, like most historical commonplaces, this does contain an element of truth. Before the Reformation Parliament assembled in 1529 Protestant doctrines could not be publicized in England (though this is far from saying that some teaching of Protestantism had not been happening). Then from 1529 the Crown-in-Parliament agreed to a series of acts which insidiously brought about the dissolution of all ties between England and the Roman church. First the King, probably under Cromwell's guidance, exploited the Commons' Supplication against the Ordinaries to secure in 1532 in the Submission of the Clergy the total surrender of the Church's legislative independence, a capitulation confirmed by act of parliament in 1534. In the same year, 1532, parliament in the Act in Restraint of Annates deprived the papacy of most of its English revenues, and the next year in the Act of Appeals broke all links between England and the court of Rome. Further acts in 1534 completed this whittling away of papal powers: the Act of Dispensations permitted the Archbishop of Canterbury to issue ecclesiastical licences and faculties and stated that the appointment of bishops pertained solely to the crown, while the Act of Supremacy recognized the monarch as the supreme head of the English Church with authority 'to reform and redress all errors, heresies and abuses in the same'. The Treasons Act, also passed in 1534, gave greater legal protection to the royal supremacy; a General Act of 1536 reiterated the royal headship, attacked papal 'usurpations' and made liable to the penalties of praemunire any subject who defended the powers of the bishop of Rome. By 1536 the English King had replaced the Pope in his own realm: parliament had declared, but not created, the royal supremacy.<sup>2</sup>

The severance of England from the papacy left something of a theological vacuum. The supreme governor, again probably at Cromwell's prompting, authorized an English translation of the bible (hitherto strictly forbidden), which Cromwell, as Henry's vicegerent, ordered to be placed in all parish churches in 1536 and 1538. The King, however, never asked parliament to approve an explicitly Protestant confession of faith, indeed, in the Act of Six Articles of 1539 he seemed to desire a return to Catholicism, but a Catholicism without the Pope. Matters changed very rapidly after the death of Henry VIII. The two Edwardian Acts of Supremacy imposed two English prayer books upon the nation, that of 1552 being unequivocally Protestant. Then the accession of Mary in the summer of 1553 brought this

<sup>2</sup> G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution* (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 331-409.

Protestant progression to a shuddering halt, though even this queen had no alternative but to use parliament to renounce the royal supremacy, repeal the previous religious legislation and gain legal authority for the national reconciliation with the papacy. The Catholic reaction only lasted as long as Mary's life. Early in 1559 the first parliament of Elizabeth passed new acts once more declaring the crown the supreme governor of the Church and enforcing a slightly modified form of the second prayer book of Edward VI. With the granting of parliamentary approval in 1571 to the Thirty-Nine Articles (a condensed version of the Forty-Two Articles of Edward VI) the official Protestant Reformation in England in the sixteenth century could be said to be at an end.

This national legislation, however contradictory in intention, received widespread local compliance and in parish after parish churchwardens' accounts reveal an apparently uniform pattern of obedience. In Exeter, to take one example of many, the churchwardens of the fairly prosperous parish of St. Petrock in the year 1538-9 bought an English Bible, and, for the first time, referred to the King as the supreme head of the church. In the first year of Edward VI they noted the last observance of obits (annual masses to commemorate the dead), and dismantled their rood screen. The following year they supervised the whitewashing of medieval wall paintings and purchased the new prayer book and the *Paraphrases* of Erasmus. The year after that they pulled down images and altars and disposed of parish plate in advance of the visit of the royal commissioners to confiscate such valuables on behalve of the crown. Then under Mary the whole process went into reverse. To celebrate the first Easter of the reign the parish laid in stocks of incense and a special paschal candle and in succeeding years acquired a pyx, altar cloths, vestments, missals and other service books, and restored the rood. The Elizabethan religious settlement met with equally prompt attention: soon after the passing of the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity the wardens obtained the new prayer book, and, in 1561-2, took down the rood once more, had sentences of scripture inscribed on the church's walls and procured a book on the Ten Commandments. Hundreds of miles away in the much less populous midland town of Leicester an identical process took place. In 1547 the wardens of the chief urban parish of St. Martin began selling tabernacles, cloths from the rood, alabasters, brasses, wax and the organ chamber, using some of the proceeds to pay for Erasmus's *Paraphrases* and for chains and nails to secure their new Bible. Towards the end of Edward's reign they disposed of more vestments, various altars, the holy water stoup, pictures and painted cloths. Yet however much these actions might seem to indicate appro-

val of the new religion, they, too, in 1553-4 acquired copes and banners, mended their organs, set up the altars and brought back the missal and other Catholic liturgical books. Then, even more quickly than their Exeter counterparts, once Elizabeth had come to the throne they transformed their church again, removing the altar stones in 1560 and buying the Bible and the *Paraphrases*, and the next year selling their Marian vestments, destroying the organ loft and erecting a table of the Ten Commandments.<sup>3</sup>

Similar illustrations of local quiescence could be given from a host of parishes throughout England whose records have chanced to survive, but the picture they present may be somewhat misleading. Outward submission to governmental ordinances might signify a willing co-operation with national religious policies but could equally well demonstrate local apathy or even cloak decided preferences for Catholicism or Protestantism. In addition, there is the further complication that not all parishes confronted the Reformation changes from an identical religious position. Recent research has challenged the assumption of some Victorian and later historians of England being a country of one uniform religious observance in 1529. Considerably before Lutheran ideas began to reach England from the continent, dissent had become entrenched in some, admittedly confined, areas of the country and these included a number of important towns. In London itself there existed an intermittent but apparently continuous tradition of Lollardy from the time of Wyclif and his followers until the 1530s and perhaps beyond. In 1509 and 1510 Londoners appeared in ecclesiastical courts charged with maintaining blasphemous opinions concerning pilgrimages, the adoration of images and, most significantly, the sacrament of the altar, and of assembling to read heretical books in English such as the four evangelists, the revelation of St. John, the epistles of St. Paul and St. James, Wyclif's *Wicket* and the *Book of the Ten Commandments*. These particular Londoners may have been of relatively humble status, but late in the previous century Lollardy had touched the fringe of the governing class when a Lord Mayor's mother-in-law had been put to death for heresy. Again in 1514 during the posthumous proceedings against a substantial London merchant, Richard Hunne, who died in prison in mysterious circumstances having refused to pay a mortuary fee to his parish priest for his dead baby, the ecclesiastical authorities produced evi-

<sup>3</sup> W. T. MacCaffrey, *Exeter, 1540-1640: the Growth of an English Country Town* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), pp. 190-1; *The Accounts of the Churchwardens of St. Martin's, Leicester, 1489-1844* (ed. T. North, Leicester, 1844), pp. 25-95; T. North, *A Chronicle of the Church of St. Martin in Leicester* (Londen and Leicester, 1866), pp. 128-31.

dence (whether planted or not has never been conclusively determined) of his having owned Lollard books.<sup>4</sup>

Early in the sixteenth century Joan Washingby, a member of a vigorous Lollard cell in Coventry knew enough about heresy in London to find employment in a Lollard household there. Lollardy in Coventry certainly embraced some of the leading citizens including former mayors, William Pysford senior and Richard Cook, other civic officials, and a physician, John Blumstone, and gained the sympathetic interest, if not more, of the incumbent of St. Michael's, James Preston, a doctor of divinity from Oxford. In the person of William Wigston junior, who had married into the Pysford family, Coventry Lollards had connections with the ruling oligarchy of Leicester, while a certain John Johnson of Birmingham who visited the Coventry Lollards also associated with heretics in Bristol. Far less information has come down about the Bristol Lollards, some of whom abjured their heresies in 1499, though it seems highly probable that Lollard traditions survived in that city into the Reformation era. Somewhat more surprisingly, Lollardy seems to have taken root in the cathedral city of Worcester in the early sixteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

In the south of England episcopal officials discovered a considerable number of Kentish Lollards in 1511 concentrated particularly in the small towns of Benenden, Tenterden, Cranbrook and Maidstone with some ringleaders in Canterbury itself. London Lollards maintained close links with the notorious Lollard area of the Chilterns which had especially strong communities in Amersham in Buckinghamshire and Burford in Oxfordshire. One of the itinerant teachers of this group, Thomas Man, claimed together with his wife to have converted six or seven hundred people to his opinions: in 1518 he confessed to having spent fifteen years with well-disposed people in Newbury in Berkshire, then to have taught for more than twenty years in Amersham and also said that he had spread Lollard doctrines in London, Chelmsford, Uxbridge and Henley on Thames, and, when persecution had grown hot in the Chilterns, that he had helped some couples

<sup>4</sup> A. G. Dickens, 'Heresy and the Origins of English Protestantism', in *Britain and the Netherlands II* (ed. J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, Groningen, 1962), pp. 47-66; *The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources* (ed. A. F. Pollard, 3 vol., London, 1913-4), III, 242-4; J. Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (3 vol., London, 1684), II, 5-6; I, 829; A. Ogle, *The Tragedy of the Lollard's Tower* (London, 1949), pp. 51-169.

<sup>5</sup> Lichfield Record Office, B/C/13 fol. 16r.; J. Fines, 'Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield 1511-12', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XIV (1963), 160-174; I. Luxton, 'The Lichfield Court Book: A Postscript', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, XLIV (1974), 120-5; *The Registers of Oliver King, Bishop of Bath and Wells* (ed. H. C. Maxwell-Lyte for the Somerset Record Society, LIV Frome, 1939), pp. 39-43; A. D. Dyer, *The City of Worcester in the Sixteenth Century* (Leicester, 1973), pp. 227-39.

to escape to Norfolk and Suffolk. Lastly there seems to have been something of a very late Lollard revival in East Anglia centred upon Colchester, with teachers going out to Bury St. Edmunds and to quite remote parts of the Essex countryside. The importance of these towns where Lollardy persisted until the Reformation should not be exaggerated; far more towns remained entirely orthodox than turned to this form of heresy, and even in the worst reputed towns Lollardy probably only concerned a small proportion of the population. Nevertheless, the existence of Lollardy in certain towns in the early sixteenth century goes some way to account for the different reception of national legislation in some towns in the 1530s when the state first began to give some hesitant recognition to Protestantism.<sup>6</sup>

Besides these well attested incidents of the continuance of an old form of heresy, Lutheran doctrines had also gained acceptance in some towns well before the official Protestant Reformation. In this respect London seems to have been well in advance of all other towns with the possible exception of the university town of Cambridge. As early as February 1528 Sebastian Harris, the parish priest of Kensington, admitted possessing a New Testament in English translated by William Hutchyn (alias Tyndale) and *Unio Dissidentium*, a key collection of Lutheran writings. In the same spring the authorities apprehended other London clergy, including Dr. Forman, the rector of All Hallows, and his curate, Thomas Garret, on charges of disseminating prohibited Lutheran books, and they also required a leading London merchant, Humphrey Monmouth, to answer a whole catalogue of accusations which implied close involvement with 'the new learning'. Monmouth stood accused not only of helping Tyndale and Roy to go to Germany to study 'Luther's sect', providing them with pensions in order that they might work on their English translation of the Bible and other 'erronious' books, and aiding them in the publication and importing of these books, but also of keeping and reading the translation of the New Testament himself, and believing that faith without works could not suffice to save a man's soul. In 1529 Foxe recorded how a priest of St. Mary Hill, William Wegan, in addition to condemning images and pilgrimages had openly commended Luther, and that William Hale, holy water clerk of Tottenham, asserted that justification came through the blood of Christ alone, thought confes-

<sup>6</sup> *British Magazine and Monthly Register of Religious and Ecclesiastical Information*, XXIII (1843), 395-402, 631-3; XXIV (1843), 133-8, 256-9, 638-43; XXV (1844), 142-5; Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, I, 877; II, 18-19, 23-41; J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials relating chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of it... under King Henry VIII, King Edward VI and Queen Mary the First* (3 vol., London, 1721), I, 74-87 and appendix 35-45.

sion should be made to God without priestly mediation and held that pardons granted by the Pope had no validity. By 1530 distinct Lutheran doctrines of this kind had made further inroads into the capital, partly through the enterprise of the mercantile community, partly through the activity of priests with university connections and also partly through the Inns of Court where Protestantism had also appeared some time before the crown had embarked upon the official Reformation.<sup>7</sup>

Once Cromwell had risen to power, Protestant ideas spread particularly rapidly in London chiefly through the agency of university trained clerics who now obtained some freedom to preach. Much, however, still depended upon local initiatives. When he died in 1537 Monmouth bequeathed money for the delivery of no less than thirty sermons, and requested Dr. Crome, Dr. Barnes or Mr. Taylor to preach at his burial. Robert Barnes, once the head of the Augustinian friars at Cambridge, like Tyndale had visited Germany and come under the influence of Luther: he often preached in London in the 1530s as did Thomas Garret and William Jerome, the vicar of Cromwell's own parish of Stepney. After the passing of the Act of Six Articles these were among the first to suffer for their faith, dying at Smithfield on 30 July 1540 only two days after Cromwell's execution.<sup>8</sup>

Within a fortnight of the burning of Barnes, Garret and Jerome some five hundred Londoners were charged with offences against the Act of Six Articles, and in parish after parish men and women found themselves in court for failing to go to confession in Lent, not taking communion at Easter and denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. Many, according to their adversaries, had been disturbing church services by 'brabbling' of the New Testament, and had become busy reasoners in the 'new learning'. Eleven parishioners of St. Magnus had apparently contributed to the maintenance of Protestant preachers such as Wisdom, Friar, Ward and William Smith, alias Wright, while certain inhabitants of St. Mary Magdalen in Milk Street had given hospitality and protection to Latimer, Barnes, Garret, Jerome and other preachers. The action which the London authorities took at this time curbed the spread of Protestantism for the rest

<sup>7</sup> *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* (ed. J. S. Brewer et al., 22 vol., London 1862-1932), IV, pt. II, no. 4029, no. 4260, p. 1877; *Victoria County History* [hereafter *V.C.H.*] of London (ed. W. Page, London, 1909), I, 254-63; Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, II, 260; R. M. Fisher, 'Reform, Repression and Unrest at the Inns of Court, 1518-1558', *Historical Journal*, XX (1977), 783-801.

<sup>8</sup> G. R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (London, 1977), pp. 174-295; Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, I, 316-9 and appendix, 249-52; Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, II, 435.

of the reign, but did not eliminate it. At least one merchant, Richard Hilles, partly motivated by religion, moved to the continent where he made contact with Bullinger. There can be no question but that by the accession of Edward VI Protestantism had become established in London both among a minority of the ruling oligarchy as well as among the masses.<sup>9</sup>

Elsewhere in England a small number of towns and cities like London anticipated religious changes which only received formal state authorization in the reign of Edward VI. In Lent 1533 the mayor of Bristol invited Latimer to deliver a course of sermons which divided the city into two rival factions, one supporting Latimer, the other Hubberdyne, a popular Catholic preacher. The corporation, very interestingly, despite its concern for law and order, pronounced in favour of the radicals. In a somewhat similar way, in Norwich, where Bilney had been preaching in the 1520s, and where he had died as a relapsed heretic in 1531, the city fathers made their commitment to Protestantism clear. In 1539 Robert Watson, a local scrivener, publicly challenged Rugge, the conservative Bishop of Norwich, for defending the concept of free will. On Watson's being summoned to London, the corporation rushed to his aid, announcing to Cromwell that they proposed to make him their town clerk so soon as the post fell vacant. Novel religious ideas were also being voiced in Kings Lynn, Yarmouth, Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds well before the death of Henry VIII. Through the combined influence of Cranmer and Cromwell a radical Protestant group emerged within Canterbury's civic oligarchy in the 1530s, and although it met stiff opposition went on functioning in the far less favourable atmosphere of the 1540s when the chamber clerk took to holding Bible reading for a Protestant cell in St. Mary's, Northgate, and instigated some image breaking. Other 'forward' towns in the Canterbury diocese included Sandwich, Maidstone, Cranbrook and Faversham. Even in Exeter which seems to have been much more conservative, a small Protestant group appeared within the governing class, perhaps encouraged by the preaching of Latimer, the warden of the Grey Friars, John Cardmaker alias Taylor, and, from 1537, the decidedly Protestant dean of the cathedral, Simon Haynes.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, II, 447-51; S. Brigden, *The Reformation in London under Henry VIII, 1521-1547* (Cambridge Ph.D., 1979); *Original letters, relative to the English Reformation... chiefly from the Archives of Zurich* (ed. H. Robinson for the Parker Society, 2 parts, Cambridge, 1846-7), pt. I, 196-264.

<sup>10</sup> G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 30, 112-20, 138-9; R. A. Houlbrooke, 'Persecution of Heresy and Protestantism in the Diocese of Norwich under Henry VIII', *Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society*, XXV (1972), 315, 319; P. Clark,

In the much freer conditions pertaining throughout the reign of Edward VI when successive governments permitted the expression of a great diversity of Protestant doctrines provided that they did not diverge from the teaching of the magisterial reformers, considerably more towns openly countenanced Protestantism. An intrepid preacher, Thomas Hancock, established himself in Poole in Dorset where he proceeded to build up a Protestant party among the inhabitants which temporarily eclipsed that of merchants sympathetic to the old religion. Knox, moving south from Scotland, ministered in both the garrison town of Berwick on Tweed and Newcastle upon Tyne, already one of the leading ports in the north of England. London, however, still remained in the van of Reformation. There the parishioners of St. Antholin's demonstrated their commitment to Protestantism by founding a parish lectureship, an event which had very great consequences for the development of Protestantism not only in the city but in the country at large.<sup>11</sup>

The effect of unbridled preaching in certain parts of England in Edward's reign can be seen during the Catholic reaction under Mary. In spite of the persecution, a Protestant congregation managed to survive in London, containing, according to Foxe, 'sometimes forty, sometimes a hundred, sometimes two hundred, sometimes more, sometimes less'. It attracted the services of a very eminent series of ministers among whom were Scambler and Bentham, who both became bishops in the Elizabethan Church, and a Marian martyr, John Rough. No other towns could emulate London in their Protestant witness at this period. The dioceses of London, Canterbury, Chichester and Norwich produced by far the greatest number of Protestants who died for their beliefs, and within these areas towns such as Colchester, Maidstone and Lewes seem to have nourished some resistance. The evidence, however, is fragmentary at best, and very few accounts have been preserved like that of 1556 for Ipswich which lists parish by parish those who had fled on account of their religion.<sup>12</sup>

Most provincial towns whatever their inclinations simply had not the resources to conceal opposition to Mary's religious policies: at best magistrates might connive at some clandestine dissent while

*English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: Religion, Politics and Society in Kent, 1500-1640* (Hassocks, 1977), pp. 38-44, 59-62, 76; MacCaffrey, *Exeter, 1540-1640*, p. 187.

<sup>11</sup> Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, II, 73-4; P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967), p. 50.

<sup>12</sup> Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, III, 774; D. M. Loades, 'Enforcement of Reaction, 1553-8', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XVI (1965), 54-66; D. M. Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs* (London, 1970), p. 12; Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, III, 791.

openly consenting to the restoration of Catholicism. Coventry and its neighbourhood seems to have been one such relatively safe area where Edward Underhill, a gentleman pensioner and enthusiastic Protestant chose to retire when London became too dangerous for him. Although they obeyed outwardly, the major and council of Bristol resented the revival of clerical power in the city and had to be ordered to attend sermons in the cathedral: four Bristol merchants may have gone into exile. Sectors of the populace seem to have expressed their opinions with more freedom than most of their local rulers dared to do. In Halifax, Hull and Leeds, all towns which received the attention of Edwardian preachers, attacks took place on the reserved sacrament and 'busy fellows of the new sort' spoke their minds against Catholic practices.<sup>13</sup>

Yet the degree to which towns had allied themselves to Protestantism should again not be exaggerated: even those corporations which seemed to show some sympathy for Protestantism were still in a very small minority. Canterbury, where a Protestant faction had emerged early, rushed with almost indecent haste to demonstrate its reconversion to Catholicism. The rather more indifferent city of Exeter, neither hot nor cold, typifies the eagerness of most local governors at this time to work in co-operation with the national government, whatever its religious programme. During the Western Rebellion of 1549 Exeter had held out against the Catholic uprising even though the Catholic aldermen on the council considerably outnumbered their Protestant counterparts. Under Mary a goldsmith, William Smythe, mayor in 1553-1554, guided the city back to Catholicism, yet made it possible for known Protestants to remain in office. The need for unity among members of a governing class could bridge quite deep religious divisions.<sup>14</sup>

The period of religious uncertainty between the accession of Elizabeth in mid November 1558 and the passing of the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity after Easter 1559 gave the religious exiles time to return from the continent and the hidden Protestants of the previous reign an opportunity of revealing their true opinions. Once more London led the way. When Elizabeth entered the City for her coronation in January 1559 the corporation staged a series of pageants in her honour which 'signified the conjunction and coupling together of our

<sup>13</sup> Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, III, 60-7; *Tudor Tracts, 1532-1588* (ed. A. F. Pollard, London, 1903), pp. 170-98; K. G. Powell, *The Marian Martyrs and the Reformation in Bristol* (for the Historical Association, Bristol Branch, Bristol, 1972), pp. 9-19; A. G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 224-6.

<sup>14</sup> Clark, *English Provincial Society*, pp. 98-9; MacCaffrey, *Exeter, 1540-1640*, pp. 189-90.

sovereign lady with the gospel and verity of God's holy word, for the peaceable government of all her good subjects.' At Cornhill she saw the virtues triumphing over the vices, foremost among which was 'pure religion' treading down superstition and ignorance. Next at Soper Lane the citizens did their best to impress the eight beatitudes upon her, promising that if she adhered to these Christian teachings both she and her country would enjoy a prosperous reign. The pageants reached their climax at the Cheap where Truth the daughter of Time consigned 'Verbum Veritas', the Bible in English, to Elizabeth. The queen graciously accepted the book, kissed it and laid it to her breast, giving thanks to the city for its great gift. Then she progressed to the final tableau of 'Deborah with her estates consulting for the good government of Israel'. So early did Londoners cast the Queen in the role of the protector of true religion.<sup>15</sup>

In the following months London Protestants took further steps to see that the outburst of preaching which accompanied these popular rejoicings did not lose momentum, and by a campaign to sponsor parochial lectureships ensured the continuance of sermons on a permanent basis. Through the initiatives of its congregation, St. Antholin's soon had early morning sermons six days of the week delivered by three different ministers, and other parishes followed suit. Outside London, smaller towns which could not afford the luxury of parish lectureships instead began supporting a civic preacher at their own costs. Very early in the reign some Coventry townspeople invited the former exile, Thomas Lever, to settle in their city, and maintained him not 'by any law or engagement... but only by free kindness and love'. Both Colchester and Ipswich, other early Protestant centres, soon acquired permanent lecturers. Bristol corporation opened its civic pulpits to committed Protestants. Foxe preached in Norwich for a year or two before going to live in London. As well as encouraging the setting up of a lectureship in the county town, the Earl of Huntington created a preaching post for Anthony Gilby at Ashby de la Zouch in Leicestershire. Many former Protestant exiles and rising young Protestant pastors had similar experiences to those of Melchior Smith who at Boston in Lincolnshire met with influential inhabitants who offered him for life from their lands some '£5 yearly, some £3, some £36s8d, some 40s. And some more and some less according to their abilities.'<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> S. Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 344-59.

<sup>16</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p. 50; *Zurich Letters, comprising the Correspondence of several English Bishops... with some of the Helvetian Reformers*, (ed. H. Robinson for the Parker Society, 2 vol., Cambridge, 1842-5), I, 87. Powell,

This voluntary attempt by the laity to further the spread of Protestantism might have been regarded as potentially dangerous by the official ecclesiastical establishment. The first Elizabethan bishops generally did not look at the movement in this light. Because of the refusal of the Catholic prelates to stay in office in a Protestant church Elizabeth had no alternative but to choose committed Protestants as her new bishops, and some of these, men such as Bentham or Scambler or Grindal entered fully into the eagerness of these lay people to propagate Protestantism, doing all they could to promote Protestant preaching in their own dioceses. The Queen, however, shared neither their aspirations nor those of the forward laity. Almost alone among her people, Elizabeth wanted a Church in which Catholics might co-exist with (moderate) Protestants. She did not see untrammelled Protestant preaching as an ultimate good. Her reign, in consequence, was punctuated by a series of clashes between the supreme governor and her more Protestant subjects with the result that right until the Queen's death Protestant evangelism continued to be a matter of local initiatives.

The religious complexion of London, determined so quickly after Elizabeth's accession, did not alter greatly throughout the remainder of the century. More and more parishes followed St. Antholin's pattern, and created their own parish lectureships: by 1589 thirty-three parishes, that is one-third of all the parishes in the city, had their preachers whom they maintained by some form of voluntary contribution. The aldermanic class, however, seems to have been decidedly more conservative in its approach to Protestantism than the citizenry at large, and the most recent historian to study the composition of the ruling hierarchy has suggested that it may not have been until well into the reign that the corporation as a body committed itself unequivocally to Protestantism. This reluctance by the governing élite to countenance what may have appeared as Protestant radicalism reflects the similar caution shown in the latter years of Henry VIII.<sup>17</sup>

London, because of its vast size and corresponding prosperity in Elizabethan England, must have always been something of a special case. There seems to have been few, if any towns outside London where the inhabitants went ahead in sponsoring Protestantism without the active support, if not direction, of at least a minority of the

*The Marian Martyrs*, p. 17; York Borthwick Institute of Historical Research HC CP 1567/8 (R VIII G 1936).

<sup>17</sup> H. G. Owen, 'Lecturers and Lectureships in Tudor London', *Church Quarterly Review*, CLXII (1961), 63-76; P. J. Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships* (Stanford, 1970); F. F. Foster, *The Politics of Stability: A Portrait of the Rulers of Elizabethan London* (London, 1977).

most influential citizens. Indeed, until some members of corporations took a specific interest in civic religion, conservatism generally remained predominant. Apart from major cities like Norwich and Bristol and certain smaller towns particularly in East Anglia and some southern counties most towns do not appear to have exhibited any noticeable eagerness to commit themselves to active Protestantism before the 1570s. Northampton certainly falls into this category. In the first decade of the reign the corporation placed no special emphasis on Protestant preaching, but the arrival there of an enthusiastic Protestant cleric, Percival Wiburn, brought about a decisive change of attitude which resulted in the remarkable Order of Northampton of June 1571. Had the diocesan bishop allowed the scheme to operate in its entirety it would have turned the town into another Geneva with ministers and magistrates working in unison to impose Protestant theology and morality upon the inhabitants. As it was, even without the proposed merger of the ecclesiastical and secular courts, Northampton had still established its religious exercises by 1571. With the acquisition of the patronages of the main urban churches the corporation gained yet further control over the town's religious affairs, consistently favouring clergy who dissented from the prayer book ceremonies. Although in time doctrinaire presbyterianism proved too extreme a form of church government for the civic leaders and John Johnson, vicar of All Saints, made a freeman by the corporation in 1585, actually changed sides and provided the crown with crucial evidence when Bancroft started his investigation into the presbyterian movement, the most influential inhabitants of the town went on protecting nonconformist (though not out-and-out presbyterian) Protestants well into the seventeenth century. Bury St. Edmunds closely resembled Northampton: in 1578 its magistrates drew up a code for the better government of the townspeople, enforcing punishments for moral offences in the town's secular courts. In the decade of the Spanish Armada Banbury has been apostrophized as 'the Geneva of English provincial towns', and by 1603 the civic governments of Barnstaple, Lincoln, Southampton, Warwick and Great Yarmouth had all come under the dominance of ultra-protestant magistrates.<sup>18</sup>

Yet these towns, though fairly numerous by the end of the century, still did not constitute anything approaching a majority of English corporations, and the questions arises as to why some towns committed themselves so much earlier and so much more fully to Protestantism than did others. Not sufficient local studies have yet been under-

<sup>18</sup> Sheils, 'Religion in Provincial Towns', pp. 168-71; A. H. Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 201-3; Clark and Slack, *Crisis and Order*, pp. 27-8.

taken to allow of any firm answers but some tentative explanations are beginning to emerge. In some towns the distribution of parishes contributed materially to the perpetuation of conservatism. When the corporation of Lincoln petitioned for an act of parliament in 1549 to reduce the number of churches in the city it laid particular emphasis on the poverty of its urban livings which only 'unlearned and very ignorant persons, not able to do any part of their duties' would accept, with the result that 'the said city is not only replenished with blind guides and pastors, but also the people very much kept in ignorance and blindness as well of their duties towards Almighty God, as also [to] the king's majesty, their sovereign lord, and the commonwealth of this realm, and to the great danger of their souls'. Lincoln in 1500 may have had as many as fifty-five parish churches: the 1549 act reduced the remaining churches to nine but still not one of these had a large enough endowment to attract an educated Protestant preacher, and the city's earlier forebodings proved to have been only too well founded. In 1576 Bishop Cooper discovered that the incumbent of St. Martin's, worth a derisory £3 13s 4d, had been ordained forty-nine years previously, was now aged seventy-eight, and, not unexpectedly, 'little versed in sacred learning'. Quite clearly the amalgamation of the livings had not been sufficiently drastic. In an attempt to improve a very difficult situation the bishop and corporation joined together to devise a scheme to establish regular preaching in the city. In 1571 the corporation tried the experiment of appointing a mayoral chaplain with an annuity of £5, charged with preaching in the parsonages owned by the city. Seven years later the corporation agreed to pay £6 13s 4d to a learned man to be chosen with the advice of the dean, who would be a reader in the cathedral and also preach on Wednesdays in a parish church. By 1600 Lincoln had bowed to economic necessity, recognizing that it could not obtain the sort of preaching it wanted by these cheese-paring expedients, and decided to pay £40 to a civic preacher, far more than any city incumbent enjoyed. Lincoln had at last taken adequate steps to remedy the problem created by the poverty of its urban livings. Worcester had a rather similar arrangement, the citizens paying for a preacher who gave his sermons in the cathedral. At Winchester, where a proposal to unite the city's livings miscarried, even though at one time it had the support both of the bishop and the corporation, the Elizabethan bishop attributed the conservatism of the city directly to the superfluity of inadequately financed livings.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> J. W. F. Hill, *Tudor and Stuart Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 57, 100-101, 110; C. Hill, *Economic Problems of the Church from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament* (Oxford, 1956), p. 57; Dyer, *The City of Worcester*, p. 233; Sheils, 'Religion in Provincial Towns', p. 160.

The city of Exeter, though both more populous and more prosperous than Lincoln in the sixteenth century, also suffered from having numerous urban churches unable to secure resident incumbents because of inadequate endowments, yet it seems to have been slower in taking steps to improve the state of affairs. Not until 1581 did it promote a bill to consolidate the city's livings, requesting parliament to grant the city the patronage of the re-constituted parishes which may have been a major reason why the bishop opposed the bill. The city tried again in 1601 to suppress six parishes, proposing to build a new church capable of holding two thousand people, but failed to achieve anything. In 1587 some citizens belatedly realized that an alternative way existed of obtaining better qualified ministers, and began to discuss the setting up of a civic lectureship: in 1599, years after some other towns had reached a similar conclusion, the chamber resolved that it would be 'very acceptable to God Almighty and the commonwealth of this city, and to the praise of God and the reforming and abolishing of diverse disorders in the same,' that 'a learned person shall be procured with the consent of the bishop to preach every sabbath day in the afternoon, and to do other godly exercises in St. Peter's church and other parish churches'.<sup>20</sup>

Canterbury may have been even slower than Exeter in formally committing itself to active Protestantism. Although a religiously radical party had gained command over the city in the 1540, the conservatives had won back direction of the council in Mary's reign, and did not finally lose their influence until 1572-3. Keen Protestants only began to predominate in city government again in the 1580s, and then in the next decade and a half they founded a lectureship, pulled down the maypole, regulated alehouses and gaming and prohibited plays being performed on the sabbath. In both Canterbury and Exeter the poverty of the town livings had clearly prevented much Protestant preaching in the city churches: in neither city had the governing class shown a particular concern about the situation until they seem to have grasped that frequent preaching might provide a means of controlling the lower orders.<sup>21</sup>

In towns in other parts of England the parochial system also acted as a brake upon the propagation of Protestantism, but for precisely the opposite reasons from those pertaining in Canterbury, Exeter or Lincoln. Particularly in the north-west and central uplands the parochial structure had never fully developed and there the parishes were far too large to cater to the needs of all the parishioners. The rapidly

<sup>20</sup> MacCaffrey, *Exeter, 1540-1640*, pp. 196-9.

<sup>21</sup> Clark, *English Provincial Society*, pp. 196-9.

expanding West Riding clothing town of Leeds in the sixteenth century still formed one huge parish of some 5,000 communicants. Only when its leading inhabitants came together in 1588 to buy up the advowson did they succeed in getting an active parish minister, whose services they later supplemented by appointing a lecturer. Halifax and Sheffield stood in a very similar case. The growth of population and the distribution of parishes seem to have been particularly out of line in southern Lancashire, and this may well partly account for the religious conservatism of the area throughout most of Elizabeth's reign: not until inhabitants of Lancashire chapelries began financing their own ministers in the early seventeenth century can a positive commitment to Protestantism be detected there.<sup>22</sup>

The nature of the ecclesiastical provision in a town, whether over-generous resulting in very poor livings, or insufficient thus making virtually impossible demands on a single cleric, clearly affected the rate of Protestant implementation. In the past perhaps rather too much reliance has been placed on a town's location, those in the south and south-east with easy access to London and Protestant areas of the continent being assumed to have become Protestant early, while those in the north and west remained conservative. Again this sort of generalization now seems to need considerable modification. A more detailed examination of two towns in close geographical proximity which yet differed much in their attitudes towards Protestantism may suggest further reasons why Protestantism received a more rapid welcome in some towns than in others.

The city of York in the first half of the sixteenth century had declined much from the prosperity it had known in the later middle ages, but experienced a slow economic recovery in the Elizabethan period. By 1600 its population may have reached some 12,000, that is it had doubled over the century and regained its late medieval level. Hull, York's great rival, had increased in importance as a port throughout the period, though in size it still fell short of York, probably having no more than 6,000 inhabitants at the end of Elizabeth's reign. As the seat of the primate of the northern province York had predictably become a major ecclesiastical centre second only to Canterbury in prestige, and as a city considerably larger and more powerful. On the eve of the Reformation as well as its cathedral with archbishop, thirty-six prebendaries and associated minor clerics York had the great Benedictine abbey of St. Mary, St. Leonard's hospital,

<sup>22</sup> R. Thoresby, *Vicaria Leodiensis; or, the History of the Church of Leedes in Yorkshire* (London, 1724), pp. 51-3; C. Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975); A. C. Richardson, *Puritanism in North-West England* (Manchester, 1972)

endowed on an equally lavish scale, an alien priory, a small nunnery and houses of all the four orders of friars. In 1500, in addition, the city still retained some fifty parish churches, far too many for its diminished population. Like Lincoln, York obtained an act of parliament to amalgamate its parishes early in Edward VI's reign, and by the end of the century its civic churches had been reduced to a still too numerous twenty-three. Hull presented an immediate contrast with York. A new town, founded by the abbey of Meaux in the late twelfth century, it had been known as Kingston upon Hull since its acquisition by Edward I. Even in the sixteenth century the paucity of ecclesiastical provision in the town hinted at its relatively recent origin. Hull had only one monastery, the Charterhouse, and houses of only two out of the four orders of friars. At a time when York contained fifty parishes, Hull had a mere two, neither fully independent. The chief parish of Hull, Holy Trinity, continued as a chapelry of the much older settlement of Hessle until the end of the seventeenth century, while the smaller parish of St. Mary formed a part of North Ferriby for much longer. The inhabitants of Hull had gone some way to increase the number of priests in the town by establishing a dozen chantries in Holy Trinity but even so at the end of the middle ages had probably only a tenth, perhaps only a twelfth of the clerics serving in York.<sup>23</sup>

Judging from information provided by wills the more affluent inhabitants of both York and Hull appear to have been content with the church immediately before the Reformation. As death approached all testators invariably committed their souls to the safe keeping of God, St. Mary and all the celestial company of heaven and those wealthy enough to do so endowed obits, left money for the saying of masses for their souls and made bequests to friars and, rather less often, to local monasteries. Instances of heresy did occur before the official Reformation. In York in 1528 the ecclesiastical officials charged a 'Dutchman' named Johnson with denying the value of prayers for the dead, confession to a priest and other Catholic practices. Much more significantly, in Hull, also in 1528, a mariner, Robert Robinson, had been caught retailing to his neighbours an account of a Lutheran service he had witnessed in Bremen: a member of his party had offended further by obtaining a copy of Tyndale's

<sup>23</sup> I have pursued this comparison further in 'Parochial Structure and the Dissemination of Protestantism in Sixteenth Century England: A Tale of Two Cities', in *Studies in Church History* XVI (ed. D. Baker for the Ecclesiastical History Society, Oxford, 1979), pp. 269-78; Clark and Slack, *Crisis and Order*, pp. 4-5; *V.C.H. York: The East Riding* (ed. R. B. Pugh and K. J. Allison, 3 vol., London, 1969-76), I, 157; D. M. Palliser, 'The Unions of Parishes in York, 1547-1586', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, XLVI (1974), 87-102.

New Testament. These, however, were very isolated incidents; the overwhelming impression given by the wills is one of satisfaction with the prevailing state of religion.<sup>24</sup>

The dissolution first of the monasteries and friaries, and then of the chantries caused much disruption in both towns, as it did throughout the rest of England, but for York the Reformation changes at least in one respect may have been less catastrophic in the short run than for Hull. A considerable number of York monks and friars and later chantry priests, who had lost their original livelihood when their houses disappeared, settled as vicars or curates of city parishes several of which, until these pensioned ex-religious came on the market, had not had sufficient revenues to attract a resident priest. The situation certainly resulted in York which Lincoln corporation anticipated might happen in their city, and three former York chantry priests were still holding livings in York at the time of their deaths in the mid-1580s. Hull had not the facilities to offer such opportunities to its dispossessed clerics: with only two parishes it had virtually no places for the former Carthusians, friars or chantry priests.

Hull in consequence seems to have been left far more open to reformed preaching in the reign of Edward VI than York where the conservative parish incumbents seem to some extent to have insulated the citizens against the new teaching. In the Edwardian period Hull's military governor, Sir Michael Stanhope, who had close connections with the Duke of Somerset, and the firmly Protestant Archbishop of York, Robert Holgate, paid particular attention to the religious state of Hull, and it seems to have been largely through their initiative that the Scottish preacher, John Rough, came to the town. The impact of his ministry may well have affected the form of wills made by Hull inhabitants at this time. Although nine still retained the old preamble, commending their souls to God, the Virgin and all saints, as many as twenty-eight employed a non-traditional form, leaving their souls to God alone. In York, however, although Holgate had done all in his power to transform the minster into a centre of Protestant preaching and established a school for the inculcation of the new religion in the young, the citizens displayed much greater resistance to Protestantism: in a sample of Edwardian wills twenty-four continued to be

<sup>24</sup> These generalizations on lay attitudes to religion are based on a study of some 650 wills of Hull inhabitants made between 1520 and 1603 and recorded in the probate registers now in the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research at York, and also on a sample of rather more than 200 York wills proved in the Dean and Chapter's court between 1530 and 1638, together with the wills of all York mayors for the same period. The preambles of all York wills made between 1538 and 1553 have been tabulated in D. M. Palliser, *The Reformation in York, 1534-1553* (Borthwick Paper no. 40, York, 1971); Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants*, pp. 16-52.

conservative and only two showed any inclination towards Protestantism. The city clergy exhibited a similar hesitancy toward new religious developments: only two of the very many parish priests took advantage of the Edwardian legislation permitting clerical marriage: Hull, on the other hand, produced three married priests when there can have been no more than some half dozen priests left in the town.<sup>25</sup>

York citizens appear to have accepted the Marian restoration of Catholicism without question, but again matters seem to have been rather different in Hull. Some townspeople stole the reserved sacrament from St. Mary's church, and were never traced. One of Hull's representatives in parliament, Alderman Jobson, joined the opposition to Mary in the Commons, and another Hull man laid charges before the Council of the North accusing the mayor, the corporation and other inhabitants of deliberately obstructing the government's policies. This local unrest gives some weight to the fact that although thirteen wills made in Hull in the Marian period reverted to the full Catholic phraseology, two kept a distinctly Protestant formula while no less than thirty-nine used an ambiguous preamble, leaving their souls to 'God Almighty, to be accompanied with all his holy saints in heaven'. This form does not appear in York, where, of a sample of thirteen wills, all except three returned to the Catholic form.<sup>26</sup>

With the accession of Elizabeth the religious divergencies between York and Hull became still more marked. Thomas Fugall, the vicar of Hessle and Hull, did not present himself before the royal commissioners in 1559 to take the oath of supremacy, and lost his living two years later after a court case in which he had been charged with persecuting married clergy and Protestant lay people in the previous reign. Immediately some members of the corporation seized the opportunity of filling the vacant living with an active Protestant minister, and sent the town chamberlain to Boston to prevail upon Melchior Smith to accept the cure. Despite continuing aldermanic favour, Smith at first did not have an easy life in Hull. A faction in the town objected to his constant preaching, complaining to the High Commission that his sermons had been the occasion of much discord. The mayor and his brethren, however, persisted in regarding Smith as a support to godly government: on All Saints day 1567 the mayor and his officers and Smith joined forces to chase out of the parish church 'disordered persons' who had refused to give over 'ringing the bell for

<sup>25</sup> *V.C.H. York: The East Riding*, I, 90-4; Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants*, pp. 197-9; *A History of York Minster* (ed. G. E. Aylmer and R. Cant, Oxford, 1977), pp. 198-201; A. G. Dickens, *The Marian Reaction in the Diocese of York*, I, *The Clergy* (Borthwick Paper no. 11, York, 1957).

<sup>26</sup> *V.C.H. York: The East Riding*, I, 94-5.

all Christian souls'. Smith's own nonconformity over vestments seems only to have raised him yet higher in the corporation's esteem. He continued as vicar until succeeded by his son in 1591.<sup>27</sup>

Although Hull possessed a highly energetic minister in Smith, because of the dual nature of the living his main responsibility lay in Hessle not in Hull, and some Hull inhabitants clearly felt the lack of a preacher they could call entirely their own. A solution was found in 1573 when the corporation, the vicar and Archbishop Grindal entered into an agreement to establish a lectureship with a very generous stipend of £40 a year. The town secured a Cambridge graduate, and fellow of Trinity, Griffith Briskin, as its first preacher, and he worked in Hull from 1573 until 1598. A nonconformist as regards ceremonies in the same mould as Smith, Briskin seems to have swiftly gained the admiration of many inhabitants in a way in which the more controversial vicar had never done. By the 1580s leading citizens were regularly calling upon Briskin to preach their funeral sermons and making him small bequests: James Chapman, who in his will required his supervisors to oversee the delivery of a course of sermons in the 'backward' town of Whitby, even left his 'friend Mr. Briskin' a tenement in Hull.<sup>28</sup>

From the evidence of wills Hull seems to have become ever more decidedly Protestant decade by decade. More and more substantial citizens chose a scrivener who could write an unequivocally Protestant preamble to their will expressing their assurance of salvation as members of God's elect. In 1574 a testator first commended his soul to 'Almighty God, my only creator, saviour and sanctifier, trusting that it shall be saved by the free mercy of God for the merits of the death and passion of that immaculate lamb, Jesus Christ, my only saviour, and by no other means': before the reign had ended at least fifty other inhabitants had used the same formula, while others made similar confessions of their faith in equally explicit Calvinist phraseology. The ruling *élite* of Hull together with the majority of the more influential citizens seem to have espoused active Protestantism of this type by at least the mid-1570s.<sup>29</sup>

The sample of York wills gives a very different impression from that for Hull: a considerable number of York citizens made studious-

<sup>27</sup> York Borthwick Institute of Historical Research HC CP 1567/8; *V.C.H. York: The East Riding*, I, 95-6.

<sup>28</sup> R. A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York, 1560-1642* (London, 1960), p. 234; York Borthwick Institute of Historical Research Chancery A B fols. 209-10, 212; Prob. Reg. 22 pt. II fols. 360r-361v (J. Chapman).

<sup>29</sup> York Borthwick Institute of Historical Research Prob. Reg. 19 pt. II fols. 729v-730r (Anderson).

ly neutral wills while even in the 1570s four still defiantly consigned their souls to the Virgin Mary. Although by 1580 the majority of York wills also show a clear commitment to Protestantism, they exhibit little of the religious fervour or concern to implement Protestant preaching displayed in Hull. Fairly soon after the settlement of 1559 which saw a purge of about half the minster prebendaries, a regular supply of preaching had been issuing from the minster under the direction first of Barnes and then of Dean Hutton, but it does not seem to have met with much appreciation from the city's rulers. Indeed, in December 1570 one alderman, William Allen, found himself in court for disparaging a minster sermon in justification of clerical marriage. Conservatism, if not Catholicism, lingered a long time in York circles, and in the 1570s one or two mayors actually used their office to protect convicted Catholic recusants.<sup>30</sup>

In an attempt to bring about a greater adherence to Protestantism among the governing class the Lord President of the Council in the North in 1579 wrote urging the mayor and corporation to appoint a civic lecturer. The corporation promptly replied that York could not fairly be compared with Hull or Newcastle which did not have the benefit of a cathedral: they would willingly go to the minster to hear sermons, but they did not consider the city need be at further charges to pay for a preacher of their own. Huntingdon, however, thought otherwise, and in the end the corporation complied, offering £30 annually (in 1585 raised to £40) for the preacher's stipend. Richard Harwood, another Cambridge graduate, held the post from 1585 until his death in 1615 and in time seems to have effected a remarkable change in attitude among the governing class. In the late 1590s York citizens for the first time began commissioning funeral sermons. Then in the early seventeenth century the corporation itself actually financed a second lectureship and passed increasingly severe byelaws concerning sabbath observance, while individual citizens began leaving money to procure preaching ministers in their parish churches. By the accession of Charles I the leading citizens of York could be regarded as wholeheartedly committed to Protestantism, but their commitment had taken a generation longer, if not more, to develop than that of Hull.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *York Minster* (ed. Aylmer and Cant), pp. 203-5; J. C. H. Aveling, *Catholic Recusancy in the City of York, 1558-1791* (Catholic Record Society, Monograph 2, London, 1970), p. 169.

<sup>31</sup> York City Library Housebook 1577-80 fols. 189, 230; Housebook 1581-5 fols. 54, 184; Housebook 1585-8 fol. 10; Borthwick Institute of Historical Research Prob. Reg. 27 pt. I fols. 25r-v (Askwith); Prob. Reg. 27 pt. II fol. 722r-v (Beckwith); I have described the development of active Protestantism in York in 'Achieving the Millennium: The Church in York during the Commonwealth', in *Studies in Church History*

The two examples of York and Hull may throw a little more light upon the process of the conversion of a civic oligarchy to active Protestantism. In York the very Protestantism of the Elizabethan dean and chapter, the traditional jurisdictional rivals of the corporation, seems to have acted as something of a deterrent to the spread of Protestantism in the town, though in Lincoln, where the Protestant faction in the council showed the utmost eagerness to work with committed prebendaries very different conditions must have prevailed. Certainly the number and consequent poverty of York parish churches made for conservatism, and in the sixteenth century York citizens, unlike their counterparts in Exeter (itself no radical city), seem to have felt no wish to alter the existing state of affairs. Ultimately, in both Hull and York, constant Protestant preaching permanently changed the attitudes of the civic governors, but this preaching needed to be a civic responsibility, and under the corporation's control. Hull, perhaps because of its dependent state in relation to its neighbouring parishes, had taken the initiative in obtaining a Protestant cleric very early in Elizabeth's reign: York aldermen almost two decades later had had a city preacher thrust upon them by an outside agent in the person of the Earl of Huntington.

As more studies appear on the state of religion in English towns in the sixteenth century no one single factor seems to emerge as the determining cause for the adoption of active Protestantism. Personal influence remains crucially important, whether of university trained preachers such as Bilney in Norwich, Latimer in Bristol, Rough in Hull, or, eventually, Harwood in York, or of committed laymen like Monmouth and his associates in London or years later of the Earl of Leicester in Warwick or his brother-in-law, Huntington, in Leicester and, belatedly, in York. Over the course of the century a pronounced change took place in the attitude of many corporations towards the social implications of Protestantism. Whereas in the 1530s and 1540s the governors of London with some cause looked upon Protestants as potential revolutionaries, disruptive of civic order, later in Elizabeth's reign they had come to regard the Protestant preachers as their allies in their task of maintaining social control. Some provincial towns, like Coventry or Norwich, seem to have reached this position earlier than London. Certainly by the end of the century corporation after corporation had regulations restricting Sunday trading and prohibiting traditional Sunday pastimes in order to enforce attendance at sermons, thus imposing upon the populace at large a more rigid

discipline than ever before. Because in the Elizabethan period little direct guidance had been given by the state (indeed, most of these developments had happened despite the inclinations of the supreme governor) at the time of the Queen's death towns still differed markedly in the degree of their commitment to active Protestantism, but many now seemed to be in the process of becoming, if they had not already become, bastions of Calvinist Protestantism.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Houlbrooke, 'Persecution of Heresy and Protestantism in the Diocese of Norwich', 319; P. Clark, *English Provincial Society*, esp. pp. 165-76.

## 2. Building Heaven in Hell's Despite: The Early History of the Reformation in the Towns of the Low Countries\*

A. C. DUKE

BETWEEN 1 July 1523, when the protomartyrs of Protestantism were burnt in the market-place at Brussels, and the summer of 1566 more than 1,300 people are known to have been sentenced to death in the Low Countries for offences against the anti-heresy edicts. Indeed, if the repression in Flanders and the cities of Antwerp and Tournai was typical, the real total of those prosecuted may have been five to ten times as high.<sup>1</sup> The judicial slaughter of Anabaptists in south Germany and Austria between 1527 and 1533 and the Marian persecutions in England may be more notorious, but in both cases the fury soon abated.<sup>2</sup> Valois France might seem to offer a closer parallel, for

\* I wish to thank Professor J. S. Bromley for generous assistance with the revision of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Of the several attempts to compute the number of heretics who were executed, mention should be made of N. van de Zijpp, *Geschiedenis der doopsgezinden in Nederland* (Arnhem, 1952), p. 77 and A. L. E. Verheyden, 'De martyrologia in de optiek van de hedendaagse martelaarslijsten' in *Bronnen voor de religieuze geschiedenis van België: Middeleeuwen en moderne tijden* (Leuven, 1968) pp. 355-61. My own estimate of the numbers executed before 1566 differs in so far as it is based on local studies of the Reformation, which use official sources in preference to the martyrologies. In the case of Holland I have relied on court proceedings and exchequer records. Heretics executed without trial, e.g. the Anabaptists put to death at Oldeklooster in 1535, have been left out of account. Though lacunas in our sources remain, notably for Artois, Lille-Douai-Orchies and Mechelen, the present state of research gives us a fairly accurate notion of the *minimum* number who were executed for the canonical offence of heresy and for crimes against the anti-heresy legislation in each of the seventeen provinces before the iconoclastic riots in 1566: - Artois 9; Brabant 228; Flanders 264; Friesland 102; the duchy of Gelre 16; Groningen 1; Hainaut 44; Holland 402; Lille-Douai-Orchies 62; the duchy of Limburg 6; Luxemburg 0; Mechelen 11; Namur 12; Overijssel 35; Tournai-Tournais 53; Utrecht 31; Zeeland 23; the condominium of Maastricht 21. The figures for the independent prince-bishoprics are: Liège 26 and Cambrai 6. For the repression in Flanders see J. Decavele, *De dageraad van de reformatie in Vlaanderen (1520-1565)* (2 vol., Brussels, 1975), II, 52-7; for Antwerp see *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* (4 vol., Scottdale 1955-7), I, 134 and for Tournai see G. Moreau, *Histoire du protestantisme à Tournai jusqu'à la veille de la révolution des Pays-Bas* (Paris, 1962), pp. 251-381.

<sup>2</sup> For the number of Anabaptists executed in south Germany and Austria see C. P. Clasen, *Anabaptism, A Social History, 1525-1618* (Ithaca and London, 1972), pp.

here, as in the Habsburg Netherlands, the ruler remained hostile to heresy. Yet the religious policy of the French king was swayed by considerations that counted for little with either Charles V or his son Philip. As a Renaissance prince Francis I protected the evangelicals at court when the *sorbonistes* accused them of heterodoxy, and even after the Affair of the Placards the king's need of support from the Lutheran princes of the Empire obliged him to mitigate the persecution from time to time.<sup>3</sup> By contrast the Protestant Reformation in the Low Countries proceeded in prolonged defiance of the State: a circumstance which goes far to explain why the Reformed Churches never enjoyed the same constitutional standing within the United Provinces as the Church established in England by the Crown-in-Parliament.

The urban Reformation in the Low Countries followed a very different course from that taken by the evangelical movement in the free cities of the Empire. This is hardly surprising. Though the towns in the Low Countries impressed contemporaries by reason of their size and number, even the most overmighty were subject to the will of the prince. For this reason they could not foster a civic patriotism to compare with that bred by the Hanseatic League or the cities of south Germany.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the proximity of the Court diminished the importance of the towns as centres of patronage and humanist culture. Above all, fear of persecution forced religious dissent in the Low Countries to go underground. For forty years the heretics lived 'under the cross' until the Reformed Protestants were granted a measure of recognition in 1566; and almost at once they were forced to flee abroad or return into hiding when the central government recovered the initiative. By the time 'the new religion' was planted in Holland and Zeeland in the wake of the Beggars' successes, almost fifty years had elapsed since the onset of the Reformation. For most of this period Anabaptist and Reformed alike had led a sectarian existence and even when the 'tyranny had been expelled' the Refor-

370-1; according to A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964), p. 266 some 282 persons were burnt between February 1555 and 1558.

<sup>3</sup> R. J. Knecht, 'Francis I, "Defender of the Faith"?' in *Wealth and Power in Tudor England. Essays Presented to S. T. Bindoff* (ed. E. W. Ives *et al.*, London, 1978), pp. 106-27.

<sup>4</sup> Many German town chronicles go back to the late Middle Ages, whereas the Dutch towns had to wait until the seventeenth century for their historians. Before then the monastery, dynasty or province, rather than the town, provided the framework for the historian. R. van Uytven, J. A. Kossmann-Putto *et al.*, 'De geschiedschrijving in de Nederlanden' in *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (ed. J. A. van Houtte *et al.*, 12 vol. Utrecht and Antwerp, 1949-58), XII, 445, 457. For medieval chronicles of German towns see H. Schmidt, *Die deutschen Städtechroniken als Spiegel des bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses im Spätmittelalter* (Göttingen, 1958).

med could not easily slough off the traits of that experience. By contrast, the evangelical movement in the German towns could develop in comparative security: Luther's books were openly printed and sold in contempt of the Edict of Worms; his cause was championed in municipal councils as well as in public debates staged to ascertain the doctrinal leanings of the burghers. And this fundamental difference is reflected in the sources available to the student of the Reformation in the Low Countries. Apart from the martyrologies and a small number of theological and devotional writings, he has to rely on the deficient and commonly hostile testimony furnished by inquisitions, court proceedings, government correspondence and exchequer records.

Charles V's determination to preserve the Catholic Church in his hereditary lands was only to be expected. When he stated that the prince bore 'le soing principal de garder et de faire observer ladicté religion catholique',<sup>5</sup> he was simply echoing the sentiments of his Burgundian predecessors. The dukes had fostered the observance movement among the mendicant orders for the spiritual well-being of their subjects; blasphemy and heresy had been prosecuted to avert divine retribution.<sup>6</sup> At the close of the fifteenth century the town magistrates apparently still shared these concerns. They valued the moral and spiritual blessings that men and women, dedicated to the pursuit of holiness, bestowed on the wider community and they called on the religious to pray faithfully for the towns where they resided.<sup>7</sup> In other ways too, the urban authorities sustained the late medieval Church. Municipal ordinances forbade the sale of meat on fast-days, regulated behaviour during church services and protected the sanctity of the churchyard. Their magistrates punished severely those who maligned Christ and the saints, because they believed, with the late fifteenth-century jurist and town magistrate, Willem van der Tancrijen, that deliberate acts of blasphemy provoked plague, dearths, tempests and earthquakes.<sup>8</sup> By appearing in the solemn processions

<sup>5</sup> *Recueil des ordonnances des Pays-Bas sous le règne de Charles-Quint* (ed. C. Laurent *et al.*, 6 vol., Brussels, 1893-1922), V, 576.

<sup>6</sup> For the policy of the Burgundian dukes towards the religious houses and the matter of heresy see A. G. Jongkees, *Staat en kerk in Holland en Zeeland onder de Bourgondische hertogen, 1425-1477* (Groningen, 1942), pp. 44-7, 110-13, 249-50.

<sup>7</sup> R. van Uytven, 'Wereldlijke overheid en reguliere geestelijkheid in Brabant tijdens de late middeleeuwen' in *Bronnen voor de religieuze geschiedenis van België*, p. 53; L. van Meerendonck O. Praem., *Tussen reformatie en contra-reformatie. Geest en levenswijze van de clerus in stad en meierij van 's-Hertogenbosch en zijn verhouding tot de samenleving tussen ± 1520 en ± 1570* (Tilburg, 1967), p. 185.

<sup>8</sup> *Corpus documentorum inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis* (ed. P. Fredericq, 5 vol., Ghent and The Hague, 1889-1902), II, 288. For the edicts against blasphemy see *ibid.*, IV 5-6, 10-11, 41-2.

held on Corpus Christi and the patronal festivals the magistrates affirmed their continued support for the Church and her teachings. Charles V might be excused, then, for supposing that the town corporations would share his abhorrence of 'l'impiété luthérienne'. Many certainly did, but by no means all.

In fact the government in Brussels never ceased to deplore the shortcomings of those responsible for the enforcement of the edicts. Zealous Catholics came to the conclusion that heresy would only be halted when all the venal and laodicean *schouten* and *schepenen* had been purged. But this was to overlook the conflict of loyalties brought about by the Reformation and the anti-heresy legislation.

Since religious dissent was scarcely a force in the late-fifteenth century, the problems of keeping order in a community with divided religious loyalties were unfamiliar. Such heresy trials as there were, moreover, had been conducted in the ecclesiastical courts, with the result that the lay magistrates, of whom only a handful would have more than a smattering of Roman and canon law,<sup>9</sup> were virtually unacquainted with the legal principles governing the prosecution and punishment of heretics. Their innocence came to an abrupt end with the Caroline edicts against 'heresy': not only were these to be enforced through the lay courts, but they were based on the medieval canon law of heresy. The canonists had treated heresy as though it were a species of lese-majesty against God and this doctrine was embodied in the penal code of Charles V. Since a crime against these edicts might therefore be treated as tantamount to high treason, the customs and privileges, which would otherwise have secured the property of burghers against total confiscation and governed the conduct of the trial, could be set aside, or even abrogated. The concern excited by these edicts and the so-called Inquisition became so universal that in 1566 the Compromise of the Nobility made their abolition the chief point in a programme which was intended to have a broad appeal.<sup>10</sup>

By appearing to curtail the chartered liberties of towns and provinces, the central government compromised the ruling urban oligarchies, who in turn dominated the representative estates of Brabant, Flanders and Holland. Although by the sixteenth century the mass of burghers in most towns no longer had any voice in the municipal

<sup>9</sup> R. C. van Caenegem, 'Boekenrecht en gewoonterecht: het Romeinse recht in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden op het einde der middeleeuwen', *Bijdragen en mededelingen van het historisch genootschap*, LXXX (1965), 12-35.

<sup>10</sup> For a fuller discussion, with documentation, see my 'Salvation by Coercion: The Controversy surrounding the "Inquisition" in the Low Countries on the Eve of the Revolt' in *Reformation Principle and Practice. Essays Presented to A. G. Dickens* (ed. P. N. Brooks, London, 1980), pp. 135-56.

government, the burgomasters, who were looked on as the guardians of the privileges, could ill afford to forfeit their trust. Failure to uphold the privileges in the face of Brussels could damage the standing of the corporation with the *corpus*. Precisely this explains why the towns militias in Leiden and Amsterdam were prepared in 1566-7 to take the defence of their town into their own hands: they suspected, not without some cause, that the corporation was prepared to open the gates to garrisons hostile to the interests of the community.<sup>11</sup>

If the prince had a clear duty to uphold the Church, the town magistrates had the no less certain obligation to maintain harmony within the walls – the *stadsvrede*. As the internal peace of a town was always endangered by the formation of parties and factions, the burghers had long been forbidden to engage in judicial duels or to hurl political insults at one another.<sup>12</sup> Though the sense of communal solidarity had suffered by the exclusion from government of the *schutterijen* and *métiers*, the notion of the *stadsvrede* lingered on into the sixteenth century.

The Reformation destroyed the religious unity of the town. As early as 1524 it was feared that verbal abuse would end in street brawls in Amsterdam, where the Franciscan preachers were heckled by the crowd.<sup>13</sup> To the president of the provincial court in Holland, the situation in some towns already looked so ominous that he was reminded of the civil commotions that had periodically disrupted urban life in the fifteenth century when the *Hoeken* and *Kabeljauwen* struggled for control: he even feared that the bloodshed and violence of the German Peasants' War would engulf the county.<sup>14</sup> In an endeavour to keep the peace the magistrates of Hoorn forbade their townspeople to taunt one another by exchanging such insults as 'You're a Lutheran of the new light', or 'You're of the old light and belong to the devil'.<sup>15</sup> To the town magistrates, struggling to keep

<sup>11</sup> See J. C. Grayson, 'The Civic Militia in the County of Holland, 1560-81: Politics and Public Order in the Dutch Revolt', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XCV (1980), 42-3; for the dramatic events in Amsterdam in February 1567 see H. K. F. van Nierop, *Beeldenstorm en burgerlijk verzet in Amsterdam, 1566-1567* (Nijmegen, 1978), pp. 53-8. A discussion of the dilemma posed by the anti-heresy edicts for the town corporations may be found in *Resolutiën van de Staten van Holland* (295 vol., The Hague, 1772-98), 12 July 1565, pp. 20-1.

<sup>12</sup> K. de Vries, 'Het middeleeuwse burgerschap: condities en consequenties', *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis*, LXXIV (1961), 220-5.

<sup>13</sup> *Corpus documentorum*, IV, 246.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 189.

<sup>15</sup> Rijksarchief Noord-Holland, *Oudrechterlijk archief*, 4515, fo. 20v<sup>o</sup>-21; a similar ordinance was published for IJsselstein on 29 May 1532, see H. R. de Breuk, 'Twee stukken betreffende de geschiedenis der kerkhervorming te IJsselstein', *Kerkhistorisch archief*, II (1859), 109-10.

order, the inflammatory sermons preached by the friars against Luther, and sometimes Erasmus, after the theologians of Leuven had condemned the Wittenberger in 1519, were most unwelcome.<sup>16</sup> at Amsterdam some of the more obstreperous mendicants were driven from the town.<sup>17</sup> Even at this early stage, the magistrates came to appreciate that the conservative religious policy of Charles V could not easily be reconciled with the imperative of peace within the local community. The qualities most esteemed by town corporations in their clergy were succinctly listed by the magistrates of Delft, when they petitioned the Privy Council in 1557 for 'a good learned and peaceable priest to maintain the aforesaid town in the true Catholic faith as well as in peace and concord'.<sup>18</sup> Unhappily this blend of virtue, talent and tact proved as rare then as in the seventeenth century, when the civil authorities frankly preferred ministers of sound doctrine, edifying demeanour, and 'mild and peaceable' disposition.<sup>19</sup>

The execution of unrepentant heretics sometimes posed a particular threat to public order. As early as 1525 an apostate monk had been unceremoniously drowned in the Scheldt after the authorities in Antwerp had deceived the public about the place of execution.<sup>20</sup> And when a couple of sacramentarian heretics were burnt in front of the townhall at Amsterdam in 1546, a wooden palisade had to be put up lest the throng of angry burghers and Hanseatics might interrupt the grim proceedings.<sup>21</sup> Precisely these fears were realized in 1558, when a riot broke out during the execution of some Anabaptists in Rotterdam and the crowd freed several prisoners. Only a few years later two

<sup>16</sup> A. Duke, 'The Face of Popular Religious Dissent in the Low Countries, 1520-1530', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XXVI (1975), 44; also *Corpus documentorum*, IV, 42-3. For the association of Erasmus with Luther by the friars see J. Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 109-10.

<sup>17</sup> C. A. Cornelius, *Geschichte des münsterischen Aufruhrs* (2 vol., Leipzig, 1855-60), II, 406.

<sup>18</sup> Cited by D. P. Oosterbaan, *De Oude Kerk te Delft gedurende de middeleeuwen* (The Hague, 1973), p. 149. In 1540 the magistrates of Harderwijk asked for clergy 'die ons ind onsze gemeente mit de woerde Goetz klar ind onvermenght trouwelicke leren ind vermanen, in die gelove, lyefde ende vreze Goitz ind tot frede, eyndracht int fruntschap onder eynderen', C. H. Ris Lambers, *De kerkhervorming op de Veluwe, 1523-1578* (Barneveld, 1890), p. ciii; see also the terms of the agreement reached with a vicar at Kampen in 1567, S. Elte, 'Rumor in casa. Kampen 1567', *Kamper almanak* (1940), 201.

<sup>19</sup> See G. Groenhuis, *De predikanten. De sociale positie van de gereformeerde predikanten in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden ± 1700* (Groningen, 1977), pp. 33, 95.

<sup>20</sup> M. Mélard, *Les débuts de la réforme d'Anvers, 1518-1530* (Liège, licence en histoire, 1971-2), pp. 135-7.

<sup>21</sup> G. Grosheide, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der anabaptisten in Amsterdam* (Hilversum, 1938), p. 299.

Reformed Protestants were snatched from the stake at Valenciennes in a famous episode, aptly known as *la journée des maubruslez*.<sup>22</sup> According to the Church, it is not the suffering, but the cause, that makes a martyr. Experience taught otherwise. In a bid to deny the heretics the martyr's crown that the crowd conferred at their public execution, the Court of Holland recommended in 1527 that those who stubbornly persisted in error should be kept in prolonged confinement until they had faded from the fickle memory of the people, and then put to death secretly.<sup>23</sup> And this advice was heeded. Anabaptists were dispatched covertly in The Hague in 1534. A few years afterwards some of their coreligionists were drowned in wine-casks in the *Raadhuis* of Utrecht under cover of darkness.<sup>24</sup> Later, other heretics were executed 'sans bruyt' in Middelburg and Antwerp to avoid disturbances.<sup>25</sup> In principle, however, public executions were staged as dramatic events, intended to point a sharp lesson; for that reason the hangman and the condemned wore special dress and symbolic devices were displayed to explain the nature of the crime to onlookers, who might expect to be summoned to the scene by the town-bell. Exemplary justice required public executions. By resorting to the clandestine execution of heretics, therefore, the local authorities tacitly recognized that religious dissent was a crime *sui generis*, though Philip II, in 1565, only countenanced the secret execution of heretics with reluctance.<sup>26</sup>

The Reformation made its influence felt early in the chief towns of Holland. In December 1524 the disconsolate Dean of West Friesland submitted his resignation to the cathedral chapter at Utrecht. Among the oddly assorted reasons he gave the insolence of the 'Lutherans' at Hoorn bulked large, for the Dean ended his letter with the remarkable assertion that he was afraid to walk through the streets on their

<sup>22</sup> I. M. J. Hoog, *De martelaars der hervorming in Nederland tot 1566* (Schiedam, 1885), pp. 31-3, 237-41; C. Paillard, *Histoire des troubles religieux de Valenciennes* (4 vol., Brussels and The Hague, 1874-6), I, 69-73. When Gillis Tielemans was executed in Brussels on 27 January 1544 the civic militia was on hand to quell any disturbances, A. L. E. Verheyden, *Le martyrologe courtraisien et le martyrologe bruxellois* (Vilvoorde, 1950), pp. 63-4.

<sup>23</sup> *Corpus documentorum*, V, 225.

<sup>24</sup> Hoog, *De martelaars*, p. 17; J. M. van Vliet, *Ketterijen en ketterbestrijding in de stad Utrecht ca. 1520-1580* (Utrecht, doctoraalscriptie, 1977-8), p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> J. J. Mulder, *De uitvoering der geloofsplakaten en het stedelijk verzet tegen de inquisitie te Antwerpen, 1550-1566* (Ghent and The Hague, 1897), p. 23-4, 31; K. R. Pekelharing, 'Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis der hervorming in Zeeland, 1524-1572', *Archief... uitgegeven door het Zeeuwsch genootschap der wetenschappen*, VI (1866), 267-72; also J. Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 36 n. 127.

<sup>26</sup> *Correspondence française de Marguerite d'Autriche, duchesse de Parme avec Philippe II* (ed. R. C. Bakhuizen van den Brink *et al.*, 3 vol., Utrecht, 1925-42), I, 102.

account.<sup>27</sup> In Amsterdam the *sincere ende goede*, as the traditionalists described themselves, were dismayed to see how quickly customary religious practices were being abandoned. Priests were jeered in the streets, church services interrupted, and scandalous songs circulated among the commonalty, who also watched irreverent plays. As the Holy Sacrament was taken through the streets to the sick, people ostentatiously advertised their contempt for the 'breadgod' by closing their doors and shutters. An incident during a procession in the town in 1534 shows vividly how low respect for the sacrament had already sunk. It was a wet, blustery day in September and the parish priest was having difficulty in keeping the sacrament aloft. As the cortège made its way across a bridge, the people in the neighbourhood were heard to shout, 'Rain harder, rain harder, drench the priest and his god'. Small wonder that priest had little enthusiasm for such processions in the future.<sup>28</sup>

At Antwerp too, the evangelical cause commanded popular support from the outset, thanks, chiefly, to the Augustinian Eremites, several of whom knew Luther personally. In 1523 their monastery was levelled in a bid to blot out the shameful memory of their wholesale apostasy.<sup>29</sup> Inside the teeming metropolis English Bibles were printed with near impunity; 'certeyn Englishemen beyng Lutherans' could evade arrest and extradition by recourse to legal subterfuges that drove Henry VIII's ambassador, Sir John Hackett, to distraction.<sup>30</sup> His complaint about the magistrates' 'denegacion of justice' in the pursuit of heretics was endorsed by certain lay Catholics who, discouraged by the shilly-shallying of the local authorities, felt bound to call the Council of Brabant's attention to the flagrant heterodoxy of some prominent clerics and printers. In their opinion Antwerp would only be rid of heresy and 'false books', if a Spanish-style inquisition were introduced to examine the inhabitants street-by-street and guild-by-guild about those under suspicion of holding erroneous opinions.<sup>31</sup>

Of course, it would be foolhardy to conclude, from the testimony of Amsterdam and Antwerp alone, that the new doctrines had taken the

<sup>27</sup> *Bronnen voor de geschiedenis der kerkelijke rechtspraak in het bisdom Utrecht in de middeleeuwen* (ed. J. G. C. Joosting and S. Muller, 7 vol., The Hague, 1906-24), VII, 385-7.

<sup>28</sup> Cornelius, *Geschichte des münsterischen Aufruhrs*, II, 378, 392.

<sup>29</sup> The fullest account of the fate of the Augustinian monks is to be found in Mélard, *Les débuts*, pt. I.

<sup>30</sup> *The Letters of Sir John Hackett, 1526-1534* (ed. F. F. Rogers, Morgantown, 1977). Among the English Protestants signalled in Antwerp at this time were Richard Herman, Richard Akerstone and George Constantine.

<sup>31</sup> R. van Roosbroeck, 'Een nieuw dokument over de beginperiode van het lutheranisme te Antwerpen', *De gulden passer*, V (1927), 267-84.

townspeople everywhere by storm. On the basis of quite flimsy evidence, it would appear that religious dissent enjoyed a popular following in at most a dozen towns by 1530.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, the prevailing mood of others seems to have been decidedly conservative. At Gouda, for example, a woman and her daughter, reputedly heretics, were chased through the streets in 1529 by an angry crowd of women and children. In 1525 at Douai, so we are told, the defeat of the German peasants, 'ennemys de Dieu et sa sainte foy catholique', was celebrated amid great rejoicing by the common people.<sup>33</sup>

The attractiveness of the early Reformation may be gauged by an analysis of the occupations of those prosecuted by the Inquisition and the lay courts for heresy and affiliated offences. Of the 380 dissidents who figure in Paul Fredericq's *Corpus documentorum inquisitionis* for the period 1518-1528, we know the occupations of 209 (i.e. 60 per cent).<sup>34</sup> A breakdown into broad occupational groupings shows that roughly two in every five might be classed as craftsmen. Among the crafts printing was comparatively strongly represented, but apparently the textile industry was not yet as closely identified with heresy as it was to become a generation later: only one-tenth of the list is known to have made a living as weavers, shearmen, dyers, woolcombers and spinners. The theology of the Reformation called the monastic way of life into question and profoundly changed both the standing of the priest in the community and his religious function, as the focus of attention shifted from the altar to the pulpit. No social groups was more directly affected, even threatened, by the new doctrines than the clergy. But they failed to meet the challenge as a united body: if Luther's sternest opponents were found among the ranks of the clergy, so also were many of his warmest supporters. We need then feel no special surprise when we discover that clerics and religious account for two-fifths of those whose occupation has been recorded. They came from all walks of life within the Church: beneficed priests, stipendiary chaplains, monks, nuns, béguines, canons regular and mendicants, especially Augustinians of the Saxon Congregation.<sup>35</sup> And this number does not include those brethren of the cloister

<sup>32</sup> Namely Amsterdam, Delft, Hoorn, Leiden and Monnikendam in Holland; Antwerp and 's-Hertogenbosch in Brabant, Bruges and Ghent in Flanders; Tournai and Maastricht.

<sup>33</sup> Duke, 'The Face of Popular Religious Dissent', p. 46; P. Beuzart, *Les hérésies pendant le moyen âge et la réforme jusqu'à la mort de Philippe II, 1598, dans la région de Douai, d'Arras et au Pays de l'Alleu* (Le Puy, 1912), pp. 106-7.

<sup>34</sup> *Corpus documentorum* IV-V. Though incomplete in its coverage and subject to revision in the light of recent research, this collection of sources remains a rich quarry for the student of the early Reformation.

<sup>35</sup> In Tournai the exodus from the clergy ceased about 1530, but in Flanders a second generation of apostate clergy matured after 1557. In Holland the pattern was

who took advantage of the turmoil to return to a secular way of life that had never willingly forsaken. It was through this *trahison des clercs* that the religious conservatism of the countryside was ruffled. In remote corners of the land, including the Wadden Islands, the occasional priest denounced prayers for the dead and the cult of the Virgin, no doubt to the bewilderment if not consternation of their parishioners, few of whom seem to have been prepared to follow their pastors into apostasy.<sup>36</sup> Even after a decade of evangelization the Reformation remained confined to the towns.

## II

It is not at all easy to explain why the religious mood in certain towns should have changed so drastically in the 1520s. Here we encounter what the late Jan Romein once called the 'problem of "transformation"'.<sup>37</sup> Quite abruptly, or so it would seem, the miracle of the mass and the mediatorial role of our Lady lost their spiritual meaning for many townspeople, at the same time as the new theology disputed the value of penance, prayers for the dead and a celibate clergy. Initially the old religious practices were disparaged as recklessly in Amsterdam or Antwerp as in Nuremberg, Strassburg or Regensburg, but whereas in these German cities medieval Catholicism dissolved so quickly that, in the vivid phrase of the medievalist Heimpel, 'the images were broken by the very men who had donated them',<sup>38</sup> in the Low Countries Charles V's stand against heresy gave the existing religious order an invaluable breathing-space.

Certainly the intense devotion characteristic of the late fifteenth century in no way prepares us for the apostasy after 1520. The last medieval century stands out as one of the greatest ages of church-building in the Low Countries.<sup>39</sup> Much of the building was spurred on by

different again: a small, though significant, number of parish clergy joined the evangelicals and the Reformed (but only rarely the Anabaptists) during the first half of the century. Larger contingents of priests apostatized in 1566 and again immediately after 1572.

<sup>36</sup> The villages along the Limburg-Jülich border appear, however, to have been more affected by radical Protestant doctrines already by 1533.

<sup>37</sup> J. Romein, 'Change and Continuity in History: The Problem of "Transformation"', *Britain and the Netherlands* II (ed. J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, Groningen, 1964), pp. 205-20.

<sup>38</sup> For Regensburg, see B. Moeller, 'Probleme des kirchlichen Lebens in Deutschland vor der Reformation' in *Probleme der Kirchenspaltung* (ed. H. Jedin *et al.*, Regensburg, 1969), pp. 12-30.

<sup>39</sup> R. R. Post, *Kerkelijke verhoudingen in Nederland vóór de Reformatie van ± 1500 tot ± 1580* (Utrecht and Antwerp, 1954), p. 508-14, supplemented by *idem*, *Kerkge-*

the need to accommodate the numerous side-chapels, where ceaselessly multiplying services for the dead could be read. If it is true that the physical features of the city reflect 'the view that man (has) of its function and purpose', then the medieval townscape, dominated by the bristling array of spires, bears eloquent witness to the deep religious sensibilities of the age.<sup>40</sup> Within the parish churches the liturgy was enriched by the daily singing of the divine office – the *zevengetijden* – as the townspeople sought to honour God more splendidly and, incidentally, to emulate the collegiate foundations.<sup>41</sup> To all appearances the Catholic religion was as firmly rooted in the affections of the commonalty in 1500 as it had been a century earlier. An Italian ecclesiastic, who toured the Low Countries in the summer of 1517, admired the fine town churches with their lofty spires and richly furnished interiors – the candelabra, finely wrought lecterns and pews – and he praised the conscientious piety of the townspeople, who would throng the churches, even on weekdays.<sup>42</sup> Yet barely ten years later the English ambassador considered the Low Countries to be in grave peril from heresy, 'for if there be three men that speak, the twain keep Luther's opinion'.<sup>43</sup>

But if late medieval society had no quarrel with the teaching of the Church, its attitude towards the clergy was ambivalent: the office of priest was extolled and ordination keenly sought, yet the first estate often had to endure the envy of the laity, to say nothing of the obloquy of moral reformers. The episcopal official from Cologne who complained in 1500 that the laity had always been ready to abuse the clergy was not alone in his opinion.<sup>44</sup> A vein of anticlericalism ran through late medieval culture, finding expression in plays performed by the *rederijkers*, in the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch's and even in the so-called Cologne Bible, printed about 1478, in which a woodcut of the Last Judgement shows a pope, a cardinal and a bishop among those condemned to eternal perdition.<sup>45</sup> During the

*schiedenis van Nederland in de middeleeuwen* (2 vol., Utrecht and Antwerp, 1957), II 266-7.

<sup>40</sup> *The Historian and the City* (ed. O. Handlin and J. Burchard, Harvard, 1963), p. vi.

<sup>41</sup> P. Declerck, 'Commuun en zevengetijden in de Brugse parochiekerken', *Handelingen van het genootschap 'Société d'Émulation' te Brugge*, CVIII (1971), 117-43; A. Viane, 'Lichten op rood', *Biekorf*, LXIV (1963), 275-6.

<sup>42</sup> A. de Beatis, *Die Reise des Kardinals Luigi d'Aragona durch Deutschland, die Niederlande, Frankreich und Overitalien, 1517-1518* (ed. L. Pastor, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1905), pp. 56-74.

<sup>43</sup> *The Letters of Sir John Hackett*, p. 81.

<sup>44</sup> Cited by F. W. Oediger, 'Niederrheinische Pfarrkirchen um 1500', *Annalen des Vereins für den Niederrhein*, CXXXV (1939), 40 n. 171.

<sup>45</sup> By the mid-sixteenth century such frank manifestations of anticlericalism, tolerated in the late middle ages, were liable to suppression. I am indebted to Dr.

fifteenth century the ranks of the clergy had been swollen by an influx of chantry priests and unbeneficed chaplains, employed to meet the demand of the laity for obits. When the clergy from the Oude Kerk in Delft processed on Corpus Christi, 1523, no fewer than 140 priests took part.<sup>46</sup> In addition to the secular clergy, a host of monastic and quasi-monastic communities had sprouted in the towns in the early fifteenth century. 's-Hertogenbosch, where one inhabitant in twenty belonged to a religious order in 1526, was probably exceptional,<sup>47</sup> but even Amsterdam counted around one thousand religious among its thirty thousand inhabitants.<sup>48</sup> To the magistrates the burgeoning of these religious foundations represented both a benediction and a fiscal burden. When the urban prosperity that had helped make possible these new foundations faltered about 1460,<sup>49</sup> the town corporations looked more critically at the terms on which the men of prayer lived in their midst. A fresh wave of municipal ordinances to curb mortmain and to limit the number of looms kept by the religious houses testifies to the concern of the towns for the economic interests of the whole community.<sup>50</sup> But far from spurning the monastic ideal, the magistrates looked for a *modus vivendi* that, whilst encouraging the religious to pursue their vocation, would take into account the frail state of the urban economy.

This partly explains the enthusiasm of the town magistrates for the observant movement among the friars: not only would their stricter life confer greater spiritual benefits than the unreformed conventuals, but they undertook to renounce all ownership of property.<sup>51</sup> Yet the spread of the observance does not seem to have brought about a lasting improvement in relations between the friars and the towns. The

David Freedberg of the Courtauld Institute of Art for drawing my attention to a neat pictorial instance of the shift of official opinion. In 1524-5 Jan Provost was paid by the civic authorities of Bruges for a 'Last Judgement' to hang in the *schepenzaal*. This showed a monk with a naked lady on his shoulders among the damned, but in 1549-50 this detail, now considered to be offensive, was removed at the behest of the magistrates; it was also conspicuously absent from a copy, painted in 1578 by Jacob van den Coornhuise for the church of Sint- Donaas. M. J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (14. vol., Leiden and Brussels, 1967-76), IXb, 85-6, 114 and plates 169 and 170.

<sup>46</sup> Oosterbaan, *De Oude Kerk*, p. 169.

<sup>47</sup> Van Meerendonck, *Tussen reformatie en contra-reformatie*, p. 132.

<sup>48</sup> Van Nierop, *Beeldenstorm en burgerlijk verzet*, p. 17.

<sup>49</sup> R. van Uytven, 'Politiek en economie: de crisis der late XV<sup>e</sup> eeuw in de Nederlanden', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, LIII (1975), 1097-149.

<sup>50</sup> D. de Man, 'Maatregelen door de middeleeuwsche overheden genomen ten opzichte van het oeconomische leven der kloosterlingen en leden van congregaties', *Bijdragen voor vaderlandsche geschiedenis en oudheidkunde*, Ve reeks, VIII (1921), 277-93.

<sup>51</sup> Post, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland*, II, 154-9.

high expectations aroused by the reformers were not always realized, partly because the observance was only grudgingly adopted by many houses. On the other hand the very success of the observant movement increased the number of foundations dependent on the alms of the townspeople. The paucity of endowments did not matter so long as the friars enjoyed the favour of the lower orders, but this could not be taken for granted, as the mendicants in 's-Hertogenbosch found to their cost in 1525. In the late Middle Ages relations between the town corporations and the friars had usually been cordial: magistrates acted as *procuratores* for the mendicant orders and eminent townspeople sought burial in the friary churches. Therefore, when a gap opened up between the religious values of the better educated burghers and the more conservative Franciscans – in Bruges, Ghent and Amsterdam – the friars had good reason to feel threatened.

The formation of 'humanist Christianity',<sup>52</sup> which stressed an interior, sober piety, sustained by bible-reading and systematic expository preaching in preference to the exempla, was bound up with the reform of the grammar schools. Besides improving the student's Latinity, the authors of the new textbooks aimed to bring him to a fuller understanding of *sacrae litterae*. Erasmus, through his *Enchiridion militis christiani* and *Novum Testamentum*, which were significantly the first of his works to be translated into Dutch, did much to shape this 'humanist Christianity'; his *Colloquia* made his adversaries, especially the obscurantists among the mendicants, appear ridiculous to the youth reading them at school.<sup>53</sup> By the early sixteenth century the rising generation of jurists, schoolmasters, clergy and urban patricians was being educated along Erasmian lines. School syllabuses were purged of the grammarians scorned by Murmellius and Erasmus.<sup>54</sup> Greek (and sometimes Hebrew) was on offer not only in the Trilingual College at Leuven, but in Amsterdam, Haarlem and Bruges, and even in many of the smaller towns in the Flemish Westkwartier.<sup>55</sup> It was not long before humanist scholars began to enter the service of the most important towns.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>52</sup> J. IJsewijn, 'The Coming of Humanism to the Low Countries' in *Itinerarium Italicum. The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformation* (ed. H. A. Oberman and T. A. Brady, Jr., Leiden, 1975), p. 224.

<sup>53</sup> Erasmus' Colloquies were blamed by one prelate for the contempt felt by young men of law for the clergy: Moreau, *Histoire du protestantisme à Tournai*, p. 134 n. 1.

<sup>54</sup> R. R. Post, *Scholen en onderwijs in Nederland gedurende de middeleeuwen* (Utrecht and Antwerp, 1954), p. 146.

<sup>55</sup> For Greek and Hebrew in Haarlem and Amsterdam see H. J. de Jonge, 'Caro in spiritum. Delenus en zijn uitleggingen van Joh. 6:51' in *De geest in het geding. Opstellen aangeboden aan J. A. Oosterbaan* (ed. I. B. Horst et al., Alphen aan den Rijn, 1978), pp. 147-8; for Bruges, A. Dewitte, 'Het humanisme te Brugge. Een overtrokken begrip?', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Zuidnederlandse maatschappij*

In 1517 Erasmus could still look forward to the time when the *philosophia Christi* would dispel religious superstition. These bright hopes faded when he found himself entangled in the Lutheran controversy. Though 'magister Erasmus' escaped censure in 1519, when the theologians of Leuven condemned Luther, the conservatives continued to insist that he, and those who shared his religious outlook, were 'Lutherans' at heart. On that account the Dominicans in the province of *Germania Inferior* were forbidden to read Erasmus in 1531 and the Crutched Friars followed suit in 1534.<sup>57</sup> Nothing Erasmus said or wrote could allay the suspicions of the conservatives. When Leo X published *Exsurge domine* in 1520 and Charles V obediently enforced the bull in his hereditary territories with a series of bookburnings and edicts, those sympathetic to Erasmus had somehow to convince men of their orthodoxy without relinquishing their principles. Humanists who believed that on certain cardinal matters Erasmus and Luther spoke with one voice were called on to perform a delicate balancing act.<sup>58</sup> Had not both men prized the vernacular Scriptures, above all the epistles of Paul, and condemned a religion of outward observance? Grapheus, the humanist secretary to the magistrates of Antwerp, could write in 1521: 'the gospel has been reborn and Paul brought to life again, thanks to the writings of Luther and others.'<sup>59</sup> It was naturally difficult for such men to sympathize with the restrictions placed on Bible study by the government. As early as in 1525 a ban was imposed on meetings where the Scriptures were discussed; a year later vernacular Bibles with tendentious prologues and glosses were ordered to be burnt. Rumour had it that the laity were forbidden to read the Scriptures altogether. The allegation was

voor taal- en letterkunde en geschiedenis, XXVII (1973), 7-8; for the Westkwartier, Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 106-7.

<sup>56</sup> E.g., Frans van Craneveld, pensionary of Bruges, Pieter Gillis and Cornelius Grapheus, clerks to the Antwerp council, and Jacob Battus, secretary of Bergen op Zoom. In 1533 Ieper sponsored the Dutch translation of Vives' *De subventionem pauperum* to win support for its controversial ordinance on poor relief. In Holland humanists like Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert and Jan van Hout acted as town secretaries from the mid-sixteenth century.

<sup>57</sup> *Acta capitulorum provinciae germaniae inferioris ordinis fratrum praedicatorum ab anno MDXV usque MDLIX* (ed. S. P. Wolfs, O. P., The Hague, 1964), p. 112; P. van den Bosch, 'De bibliotheken van de kruisherenkloosters in de Nederlanden vóór 1550', *Archief- en bibliotheekwezen in België*, Extranummer XI, *Studies over boekenbezit en boekengebruik in de Nederlanden vóór 1600* (Brussels, 1974), 579.

<sup>58</sup> J. Trapman, *De Summa der godliker schrifturen* (Leiden, 1978), p. 117.

<sup>59</sup> *Corpus documentorum*, IV, 106. In 1522 an evangelical schoolmaster at Delft, writing to Caspar Hedio, accused Erasmus of being a nicodemite, see D. P. Oosterbaan, 'School en kerk in het middeleeuwse Delft', *Spiegel der historie*, I (1966), 113, yet Dürer, on hearing a false report of Luther's death in 1521, believed Erasmus might take up the Wittenberger's struggle, see A. Dürer, *Diary of his Journey to the Netherlands, 1520-1521* (ed. J.-A. Goris and G. Marlier, London, 1971), pp. 90-3.

groundless, but it must have seemed plausible.<sup>60</sup> Monasticism also came under sharp attack, from humanists and evangelicals alike, and many deserted the religious houses on the pretext of 'christian liberty'.<sup>61</sup>

As already observed, the friars had special cause for alarm. Not only was their religious calling disparaged: their way of life was threatened by the new ordinances then being introduced in certain Flemish towns for the relief of the poor. Even though an exception was made for the mendicant orders, in the obstacles now placed in the way of indiscriminate almsgiving, the friars must have felt uncomfortably at odds with the official values of society. Nor could they be blind to the evangelical teaching which no longer equated poverty with holiness, and which regarded them less as apostles to the urban poor than as parasites. In reaction the friars struck out wildly at both Luther and Erasmus, roundly condemning as 'heretical' any change contrary to the interests of the clergy, even where no matter of doctrine was at issue.<sup>62</sup>

The religious ferment that characterized the 1520s proceeded from the concurrence of several, initially unrelated, tendencies. Among the educated urban classes, respect for the piety of the late Middle Ages seems to have weakened as christian humanism penetrated the schools. Anticlericalism itself had been sharpened by the frequent refusal of the secular clergy and the monasteries to contribute to the excises levied on the laity, at a time when many towns were in decline. In the early sixteenth century the process known to German historians as the *Verbürgerlichung des Kirchenwesens* was hastened by schemes to place poor relief under the supervision of the magistrates. There was no necessary connexion between Protestantism and christian humanism, anticlericalism or laicization but there were, as the conservatives instinctively appreciated, points of contact. In practice it was nigh impossible to tell whether those who ransacked the religious houses in 's-Hertogenbosch in 1525 or Hoorn in 1529 were impelled by hatred of the clergy, the lure of food and drink, or heresy. Even if the intentions of the assailants were uncomplicated by ideology, those in authority prompted by fear and suspicion, were likely

<sup>60</sup> *Corpus documentorum*, V, 350.

<sup>61</sup> In 1521 two anti-monastic works were published, the anonymous *Lamentationes Petri* at Zwolle and the late medieval treatise *De liberate christiana* by Johannes Pupper von Goch, which Grapheus had published for the first time. On this theme see J. Trapman, *De Summa*, pp. 24-6, 107-9.

<sup>62</sup> Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 107-36. For other examples of the indiscriminate use of 'heresy' and 'heretical' by conservatives see L. J. A. van de Laar, 'De opkomst van de reformatie in 's-Hertogenbosch c. 1525-1565,' *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de katholieke kerk in Nederland*, XX (1978), 136.

to interpret such acts as the work of heretics. It was often difficult, also, to determine whether those who criticized the monastic vocation had been influenced by Erasmus or by Luther. Burghers who set great store by sermons based on the Bible might easily be converted to the principle of *sola scriptura*, while those who resented the privileged position enjoyed by the clergy in the towns could base their demand for change on Luther's assertion that 'baptism, gospel and faith alone make men religious'.

### III

Such confusion helps to explain the erratic policy pursued by the magistrates of Amsterdam towards the religious dissidents in their town. Although the central government had been irritated by the nonchalant treatment of heretics in Amsterdam ever since 1525, it could do little but issue reprimands, for the corporation formed a self-perpetuating clique. Moreover, the post of *schout*, which ordinarily would have been in the gift of the government, had been leased to the town. The officer at this critical time made no secret of his interest in the new religious ideas: Mr. Jan Hubrechtsz. had read books by Melancthon and discussed points of Scripture with a priest who had sat at the feet of Luther. Not surprisingly, the edicts were enforced with little enthusiasm during his time in office; it was alleged, indeed, that notorious heretics were tipped off by the *schout* so that they might evade arrest.<sup>63</sup> But the *schout* would not have remained in office unless he had the support of at least some magistrates. These were responsible, so it was later claimed, for advancing clergy of dubious orthodoxy to benefices in their gift. To make way for one such chaplain, a loyal Catholic priest had been ousted and the corporation had agreed that his successor need celebrate mass only as often as he wished. Nor was their choice of schoolmasters any more satisfactory in the eyes of conservatives, for they appointed two humanists with strong evangelical leanings. The magistrates made no secret of their aversion to the execution of heretics. After certain Anabaptists from Amsterdam had been executed at The Hague in 1531 on the orders of the provincial council, one burgomaster told government officers that no more heretics would be delivered to 'the butcher's block'. To find favour in the sight of the governors of Amsterdam, you had to take

<sup>63</sup> A. F. Mellink, *Amsterdam en de wederdopers in de zestiende eeuw* (Nijmegen, 1978), pp. 10-11. More information about Jan Hubrechtsz.'s evangelical sympathies is given in the sentence of 1540, when he was banished, Algemeen Rijksarchief 's-Gravenhage, Hof van Holland, 5654, fo. 42v<sup>o</sup>-45v<sup>o</sup>.

the side of the 'Lutherans', or so it was said by disgruntled conservatives.<sup>64</sup>

At first the religious dissidents did not leave the Catholic Church. They would seek out the sermons of well-disposed clerics and make their confessions to sympathetic or undemanding priests. As early as 1523, it is true, clandestine meetings were taking place in private houses in the town, and at these the Scriptures would be read and discussed. But such exercises supplemented, rather than replaced, the mass.<sup>65</sup> As sacramentarian opinions gained ground after 1525, some evangelicals began indeed to stay away from confession and communion, and to form rudimentary congregations. But the transition from dissent to schism was not completed overnight: many hesitated to break with the Church into which they had been incorporated by baptism, partly out of fear for the legal consequences, but also because they, like Calvin himself, first had to be convinced that the evangelicals were not wilful sectarians.

Around 1530, nevertheless religious dissent in Amsterdam did crystallize into a mass movement, with an inchoate church order. Preachers were commissioned, alms distributed to the needy by deacons, baptism on confession administered to those who abjured the Roman faith and the Lord's Supper commemorated. A counter-church was born. By late 1533 Amsterdam was gripped by a religious hysteria that recalls the mood in towns like Bruges and Tournai at the height of the flagellant movements in the wake of the Black Death. The reasons for the remarkable metamorphosis that dissent underwent in Holland in these years are still debated by historians. The strongholds of the Anabaptists in the northern part of the county – Leiden, Amsterdam and Waterland and the Zaanstreek – were acutely sensitive to any adverse change in the pattern of trade. It so happened that both the cloth industry of Leiden and the grain trade of Amsterdam were disrupted at this time, creating widespread unemployment and a sense of insecurity.<sup>66</sup> According to the government, it was the 'gens non lettrez, povres, mécaniques'<sup>67</sup> who were most susceptible to the apocalyptic tidings. Such an impression is reinfor-

<sup>64</sup> Cornelius, *Geschichte des münsterischen Aufruhrs*, II, 403-13.

<sup>65</sup> Mellink, *Amsterdam en de wederdopers*, p. 12; *Corpus documentorum*, IV, 259-61; V, 237-42.

<sup>66</sup> A. F. Mellink, *De wederdopers in de noordelijke Nederlanden, 1531-1544* (Groningen and Djakarta, 1953), pp. 1-19.

<sup>67</sup> Cited by H. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique* (6 vol., Brussels, 1900-29), III, 116. In Amsterdam a distinction was drawn in the 1530s between the *sacramentisten*, who found some support among the propertied classes, and the penniless Anabaptists. E.g. Algemeen Rijksarchief 's-Gravenhage, Stukken afkomstig van ambtenaren van het centraal bestuur, 93, letters dated 15 and 24 March 1535.

ced by an examination of the occupations followed by the 188 persons who came to the notice of the courts during 1534-5 for their part in the Anabaptist movement in Amsterdam.<sup>68</sup> Of the seventy-two people whose occupation is known, thirty-two made a living in metalworking – as glassblowers, cutlers, armourers – and in the clothing sector – as tailors and shoemakers. But the clergy, so prominent among the dissidents a few years earlier, were conspicuously under-represented among the Anabaptists, though several still entertained evangelical notions. Anabaptism in Württemberg has been called ‘a movement of the non-intellectual classes’,<sup>69</sup> and the same could be said of its counterpart in Amsterdam. The Anabaptists inhabited the twilight world of back alleys, cheap lodgings and inns; they often held their meetings on the edge of the town. Unlike the Reformed Protestants of 1566, the Anabaptist made few converts among the wealthy merchants living in the fashionable Warmoesstraat. More than half of those prosecuted had been born apparently outside Amsterdam. Some, of course, had only recently arrived in readiness for a rising planned for May 1535; others may have been victims of the courts’ notorious bias against strangers. But it is quite possible that the large immigrant population was predisposed to Anabaptism. Drawn to the city in the hope of employment, they missed the stability furnished by family ties and local tradition. Such people might find the prospect of the Second Coming much more inviting than those with a greater social and material stake in the existing order: most of them had, as the government discovered to its chagrin when it tried to seize their property, little to lose.<sup>70</sup>

The social composition of religious radicalism at Amsterdam, thus analysed, confirms Pirenne’s famous description of Anabaptism as ‘the Protestantism of the poor’.<sup>71</sup> Yet the upper reaches of urban society, at least in Deventer and Amsterdam, were less hostile to the Anabaptists than would seem to be implied by the harsh punishment meted out to the heretics by the magistrates in 1535.<sup>72</sup> Jan Beukelsz., better known as John of Leyden, was received at table by one burgo-

<sup>68</sup> Information from G. Grosheide, ‘Verhooren en vonnissen der wederdopers, betrokken bij de aanslagen op Amsterdam in 1534 en 1535’, *Bijdragen en mededeelingen van het historisch genootschap*, XLI (1920), 1-197.

<sup>69</sup> C. P. Clasen, ‘The Sociology of Swabian Anabaptism’, *Church History*, XXXII (1963), 154.

<sup>70</sup> The net profit to the fisc from the confiscated estates of heretics between 1525 and 1535 amounted to less than 990£. i.e. 4.7 per cent of the total sum fetched by the sales of property, Grosheide, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der anabaptisten*, p. 85.

<sup>71</sup> Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, III, 117.

<sup>72</sup> The Deventer patrician family Van Wynssem included several convinced Anabaptists, J. de Hullu, *Bescheiden betreffende de geschiedenis der hervorming in Overijssel. Deventer 1522-1546* (Deventer, 1899), pp. 144-50, 235.

master; another member of the corporation died a martyr to the Anabaptist cause; still others had relations among the heretics.<sup>73</sup> Even the seizure of Münster and an Anabaptist plot to take Amsterdam in 1534 failed to persuade the magistrates to abandon their humanist and evangelically-coloured Catholicism in favour of the traditional theological certitudes defended by the conservatives. As late as February 1535 certain Anabaptists could still address the burgomasters as 'our brethren': though such confidence was surely misplaced, the claim did not seem fanciful to the critics of the corporation. But that rash assertion, uttered in the hearing of the *procureur-generaal*, may have been the Anabaptists' undoing.<sup>74</sup> To scotch so damaging a rumour the magistrates were compelled to make a volte-face. Any lingering sympathy for the Anabaptists evaporated in May 1535, when the hotheads tried to seize control of Amsterdam. For the past decade the central government had been convinced that the latitudinarianism of certain magistrates would lead to disorder and events had proved it right. The political logic was inescapable. Between February and July 1535 sixty-two heretics were executed at Amsterdam, and many more banished, as the chastened corporation strove to impress Brussels with a belated display of exemplary severity.<sup>75</sup> In vain, for those most compromised by their earlier irresolution were driven from office in 1538, and for the next forty years Amsterdam was governed by a staunchly orthodox oligarchy. Throughout the county of Holland Anabaptists were hunted down: between 1534 and 1536 more than two hundred heretics are known to have been put to death in a repression whose severity surpassed even that endured by the Protestants of Flanders from 1559 to 1564, when one hundred and twenty were executed.<sup>76</sup> The town magistrates were thoroughly alarmed and they prosecuted Jorists and Batenburgers ruthlessly in 1539 and again in 1544. For at least a decade heresy in Holland was identified with Anabaptism, and Anabaptism in turn with disorder, even rebellion. For almost all this period the provincial estates, so

<sup>73</sup> Mellink, *Amsterdam en de wederdopers*, pp. 27-8, 42.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48-9.

<sup>75</sup> Grosheide, *Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der anabaptisten*, pp. 60-1, 304-7. Among the fugitives was a certain Mr. Wouter Henricz. 'hebreeuwsmeester', who later entered the service of Henry VIII as *biblioscopus*. For the career of this evangelical humanist see De Jonge, 'Caro in spiritum', pp. 146-51.

<sup>76</sup> According to a list, lying loose in Algemeen Rijksarchief 's-Gravenhage, Rekeningen van de rekenkamer, 4460, one hundred and twenty-six persons were condemned to death 'vuyt saicke van lutherie ende anabaptisterie' by the *schepenbanken* between 1534 and c. 1537. The list should be used with caution, for it omits five Anabaptists executed at Hoorn in 1535, while including several heretics sentenced outside Holland. For the repression in Flanders see Decavele, *De dageraad*, II, 57.

loud in the 1520s in the defence of privileges allegedly infringed by the anti-heresy legislation, kept an eloquent silence.<sup>77</sup>

By the middle of the century the governing classes in Holland had nonetheless lost their dread of heresy. The pace of magisterial repression slackened palpably after 1553, despite the insistence of Charles V, and later Philip, that the government's draconian edicts should be enforced to the letter. Once more, militant Catholics among the magistrates found themselves on the defensive. The conservatives nourished dark suspicions about the orthodoxy of prominent burghers in the towns of Holland. In the most sensational case the *schout* of Amsterdam was eventually acquitted of heresy and failure to prosecute Anabaptists, while the authors of these charges were found guilty of suborning witnesses, perjury and slander.<sup>78</sup> Not surprisingly, this verdict which shows how the obsession with heresy had faded amongst the judges, cast the conservatives into despair. In the States of Holland too, the deputies from the town corporations again ventilated grievances over the methods used to suppress heresy. The more dispassionate treatment of heresy owed much to the changed nature of urban dissent. Among the Anabaptists the pacific teachings of Menno Simons gradually prevailed and the fanaticism of earlier years ebbed away. But the refusal of Anabaptists to bear arms in the town militias and to take the oath required of burghers, coupled with their rejection of the office of magistrate as unchristian, limited the appeal to the 'small men' – the *kleine luyden* – in the towns. By contrast, Reformed Protestantism respected the ethos of the burghers. In the late 1550s this formulation began to make some headway among the merchants and artisans in Amsterdam and in the smaller towns of the Noorderkwartier. But in the larger perspective of the Netherlands Reformation the towns of Holland had by then, perhaps even earlier, ceased to play a central part. The decisive confrontation was taking place in the towns of Brabant, Flanders and Wallonia.

#### IV

The towns of Brabant and Flanders had been little affected by the

<sup>77</sup> For a lone defence by Amsterdam *in casu* its privilege of limited confiscation see *Resolutiën van de Staten van Holland*, 18 April 1537, p. 281.

<sup>78</sup> J. J. Woltjer, 'Het conflict tussen Willem Bardes en Hendrick Dirckszoon', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, LXXXVI 178-99. Around 1558 one Edelinck Vreicxz. called Hoorn 'jongen Eembden' and later accused prominent inhabitants of that town of attending conventicles, see Rijksarchief Noord-Holland, Oudrechterlijk archief, 4153, fo. 334, 408, 409v°, 410, 415, 416; *ibid.*, 4515, fo. 108-111v°.

religious agitation that had convulsed the northern provinces during 1534-5. Most Anabaptists in the south at this time came from Holland or, in the case of Antwerp, from Maastricht. They were flushed out before they could build up a following.<sup>79</sup> Because the settled political order was not at this stage menaced by the heretics, the magistrates had the less reason to agree with those zealots who called for the extirpation of religious dissent, heedless of the risk to their trade or privileges. Perhaps, too, because of their greater civic awareness, symbolized by their campaniles and ornate gothic townhalls, they were even more determined that no ecclesiastical courts should encroach on their liberties. In Bruges and Ghent, moreover, the cultivated political and intellectual *elites* had been attracted by the biblical and eirenic Catholicism of Erasmus and Cassander – so much so, indeed, as to bring them into conflict with the friars, who obstinately defended scholastic theology and late medieval piety.<sup>80</sup> For these reasons the triumph of the conservatives that had occurred in Amsterdam in the wake of the Anabaptist challenge was postponed.

As already observed clergy, lawyers, schoolmasters and printers were prominent in the reforming circles of the 1520s. They continued to dominate the evangelical movement at Ghent until at least 1545.<sup>81</sup> At Leuven, the Reformation was confined almost entirely to such groups. Between 1530 and 1550 some eighty persons were prosecuted for heresy and related offences: to a man, they were skilled craftsmen, prominent burghers and graduates of the University.<sup>82</sup> Protestantism failed to develop a popular base here – a striking fact because Leuven suffered a severe economic decline in the sixteenth century and its streets swarmed with paupers and unemployed.

The religious issues of the day were brought to the notice of the townspeople in Flanders and Brabant through the morality plays performed by the influential Chambers of Rhetoric – the *rederijkers-kamers*. From conventional satires of clerical avarice some chambers proceeded to question the veneration shown to images and relics. If explicit statements in favour of Protestant theology are rare, many of the plays betray evangelical sympathies by their appeal to Scripture and their Christocentric bias. This appears transparently in the plays presented at a celebrated national contest in Ghent during 1539. On

<sup>79</sup> Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 299-321; A. F. Mellink, 'Antwerpen als anabaptisten-centrum tot ± 1550', *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, n.s., XLVI (1964), 155-68.

<sup>80</sup> Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 53-192.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 524-6.

<sup>82</sup> R. van Uytven, 'Bijdrage tot de sociale geschiedenis van de protestanten te Leuven in de eerste helft der XVIe eeuw', *Mededelingen van de geschied- en oudheidkundige kring voor Leuven en omgeving*, III (1963), 3-38.

that occasion the Chambers were asked to take as their theme 'the best consolation for a dying man'. Remarkably, not one of the nineteen companies so much as mentioned the sacrament of Extreme Unction: instead, the dying were urged to put their trust in Christ.<sup>82</sup> The Erasmian flavour of this advice alarmed conservative churchmen, who were quick to discern in such neglect of the sacraments a dangerous dilution of the Catholic faith. Some plays also incurred ecclesiastical disapproval because they encouraged people to read the Scriptures on their own. When the bishop of Tournai's censor banned a play, based on the Book of Samuel, in 1585, he did so 'chiefly because the actors as well as the spectators buy Bibles in the French language and thumb through them'.<sup>84</sup> But long before then the chambers had gone into decline, partly because of the growing preference among the educated for *le théâtre scolaire*, but also because they had been subjected to a stifling supervision by the central government and the Church, both fearful of their contamination by heterodox ideas.<sup>85</sup>

Somewhere between 1545 and 1550 the urban Reformation in Flanders acquired a more popular and organized character. In the wake of ferocious persecutions during 1544-5 it seemed as though interest in the Reformation would be confined in Ghent, as in Leuven, to the intelligentsia and the great merchants, who retreated into a 'sort of salon Protestantism'.<sup>86</sup> But if some were prompted to cloak their religious beliefs in a discreet silence before the world, others were compelled to seek safety abroad in the churches of refuge. From 1556 onwards a few returned as ministers to preach doctrines that may be described quite properly as 'Reformed Protestant'. Meanwhile in Bruges, where artisans had always figured more prominently among the dissidents than in Ghent, humble French-speaking workers were propagating Calvinism among their fellows.<sup>87</sup> By 1560 the chief towns in the county possessed organized congregations. What is more, they

<sup>82</sup> Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 199-200.

<sup>84</sup> R. Lebègue, 'L'évolution du théâtre dans les provinces du Nord' in *La Renaissance dans les provinces du Nord (Picardie-Artois-Flandre-Brabant-Hainaut)*, (ed. F. Lesure, Paris, 1956), p. 126. The custom of electing abbots of misrule and boy bishops also fell victim to the new censoriousness. In the context of the Protestant repudiation of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass, the element of parody in these mock rituals shocked conservatives.

<sup>85</sup> Nor did the *rederijkerskamers* survive any better in the northern Netherlands, where the Reformed synods disliked their meddling in sacred matters. The contribution the rhetoricians had made to undermining the religious values of the old faith was soon forgotten. J. G. C. A. Briels, "'Reyn genuecht.'" Zuidnederlandse kamers van Rhetorica in Noordnederland, 1585-1630', *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis*, LVII (1974), 4-15, 38-49.

<sup>86</sup> Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 322.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 339.

were in correspondence with their coreligionists in Antwerp and the Walloon towns, as well as with London and Emden. The growth of confessional Protestantism in Flanders after 1550 was further assisted by the arrival of Mennonite 'elders' from the northern Netherlands. And yet, though the Protestant communities in the larger Flemish towns were becoming bolder and more self-aware, they could not match the daring of their coreligionists in the industrialized countryside of the Westkwartier. In the centres of the new draperies – Hondschoote, Belle, Armentières – heresy commanded such massive support that it seemed as though Catholicism would be entirely effaced.

Having acquired a confessional identity, the Protestant communities in the southern towns had to consider on what terms they should live, as Calvin put it, 'among the papists'. In Calvin's opinion the choice before the faithful Christian was disconcertingly plain: he might remain at home, provided he shunned all contact with idolatry, or he should withdraw to some place where the gospel was professed publicly. Such uncomfortable counsel dismayed the Reformed Protestants of Tournai and Valenciennes in 1543-4, for those who failed to attend mass or refused to have their infants baptized by the priest courted banishment and, even, death.<sup>88</sup> For so long as Reformed congregations lived 'under the cross', these issues would preoccupy their synods. Probably only a quite small proportion of those well-disposed to the new doctrines were prepared to abjure their Roman faith and place themselves under the discipline of the consistory. However, around the small core of committed Reformed Protestants, a much larger number of *prudents* coalesced.<sup>89</sup> These preferred to profess their faith in their hearts, but they would not as a rule join the congregation for worship. Relations between the *fidèles* and the *prudents* were sometimes strained, not least because the *prudents* included many *gens de qualité*, who hesitated to risk their lives and property, though we should not forget that the intelligentsia may also

<sup>88</sup> Moreau, *Histoire du protestantisme à Tournai*, pp. 90-1.

<sup>89</sup> When the Reformed achieved a quasi-official status in 1566 some *prudents* entered the consistories. Until then these bodies had been dominated by *gens de petite qualité*. E.g. the consistory at Valenciennes was reinforced in 1566 by several prominent *marchands et bourgeois*, P. Beuzart, *La répression à Valenciennes après les troubles religieux de 1566* (Paris, 1930), p. 119. At Middelburg the original consistory had been composed of those 'who had nothing to lose', whereas the new consistory, responsible significantly for policy, had a leavening of more respectable burghers, J. van Vloten, *Onderzoek van 's konings wege ingesteld omtrent de Middelburgsche beroerten van 1566 en 1567* (Utrecht, 1873), pp. 70, 128, 160. Cf. A. J. M. Beenakker, *Breda in de eerste storm van de opstand. Van ketterij tot beeldenstorm* (Tilburg, 1971), pp. 61-2.

have felt some uneasiness about the growing dogmatism of the Reformed leadership.

At Antwerp the social differences between the members of the Reformed congregation and fellow-travellers, who remained on the fringes, gave rise to a serious dispute during 1557-8. The newly-formed congregation plainly expected their minister, Adriaen van Haemstede, to serve only those who had broken with the Roman Church. The elders in the consistory were therefore indignant when Van Haemstede insisted that he was under an obligation to preach the gospel outside the closed circle of the congregation. What irked the elders was Van Haemstede's willingness to preach discreetly to the rich, who had refused to join the congregation for fear, so it was alleged, of being delated to the authorities by spies among the poorer brethren.<sup>90</sup> In this way the repression aggravated the social differences among the Protestants in the southern towns. If the dissidents in Holland were exempt from such pressures until the coming of Alva and the creation of the Council of Troubles,<sup>91</sup> this may be attributed to the lax enforcement of the edicts after 1553 and the slower growth of confessional consciousness among the heretics in that county.

## V

The course of Protestantism in the Walloon towns differs so markedly from that observed in Flanders and Brabant as to constitute yet another pattern of urban reformation. In the first place Anabaptism held little attraction for the French-speaking towns. Although a small Anabaptist congregation existed at Tournai, its members were either Dutch-speaking immigrants to the town or else Tournaisiens with close family or professional ties with Ghent, Kortrijk and Antwerp.<sup>92</sup> The failure of Anabaptists to surmount the language barrier, in

<sup>90</sup> A. J. Jelsma, *Adriaan van Haemstede en zijn martelaarsboek* (The Hague, 1970), pp. 28-30, 36-42, 49-60. At Ghent a schoolmaster also insisted on the need to evangelize outside the congregation, Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 323. As Professor Roelink once remarked, 'The class conflict was found within, as much as outside, Calvinism', 'Het Calvinisme' in *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, IV, 287.

<sup>91</sup> E.g., H. J. Jaanus, *Hervormd Delft ten tijde van Arent Cornelisz., 1573-1608* (Amsterdam, 1950), p. 26.

<sup>92</sup> Moreau, *Histoire du protestantisme à Tournai*, pp. 118-20, 199-205. The thirteen Anabaptists, executed at Lille in 1563, were natives of Halewijn (Halluin), a Dutch-speaking village in the province of Lille-Douai-Orchies, M. P. Willems-Closset, 'Le protestantisme à Lille jusqu'à la veille de la révolution des Pays-Bas, 1521-1565', *Revue du nord*, LII (1970), 215.

marked contrast to Reformed, who evidently found this no obstacle, may be attributed to the relatively humble background of its preachers, few if any of whom had an adequate command of French.<sup>93</sup>

Even in 1566 – the *annus mirabilis* in the calendar of the Reformation in the Low Countries – the hegemony of the Catholic Church was overthrown, and then but for a season, in only two substantial towns, Tournai and Valenciennes. Here the stampede into Protestantism, followed by the near elimination of heresy once these towns had been brought to heel in 1567, recalls the violent fluctuations of religious allegiance observed in certain French towns in the same period. On the eve of the civil wars in France, around one-fifth of the inhabitants of Rouen and one-third in the case of Lyon embraced Protestantism, but many of these defected after the massacres had left them demoralized.<sup>94</sup> In more important respects too, the Reformation in these Walloon towns seems to have followed in the train of French Protestantism. Until 1534 the *luthériens* of Tournai kept personal links with evangelical circles in Paris. And when in need of counsel or succour, the Protestants from the southern Netherlands turned, like their French coreligionists, to Strassburg and, after the Lutherans gained the ascendancy in that city, to Geneva, though some refugees from the Walloon towns also forged links with the Protestant churches in the Lower Rhineland.<sup>95</sup> Towards the close of the Habsburg-Valois wars the heretics grew more audacious. On Christmas Day 1554 Bertrand Le Blas sealed his fate by snatching the host from the priest and denouncing it as idolatrous. In 1561 psalm-singing crowds filed through the streets of Tournai and Valenciennes in closely concerted *chanteries*, similar to the demonstrations staged in Lyon ten years earlier. When two noted Calvinists were on the point of execution in April 1562 at Valenciennes, the crowd rioted and released the prisoners, and in the following year many townspeople, some of them armed, flocked to the public *prêches* in imitation of their coreligionists across the border. Taunts and threats against the Catholic clergy also recall the ‘triumphalism’ displayed by Parisian Protestants

<sup>93</sup> One leading Flemish Anabaptist admitted he could not help some French-speaking coreligionists ‘on account of the language’. Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 448.

<sup>94</sup> Based on P. Benedict, ‘Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth Century Rouen: The Demographic Effects of the Religious Wars’, *French Historical Studies*, IX (1975), 223-6; N. Z. Davis, ‘Strikes and Salvation at Lyon’ in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London, 1975), p. 1; J. Estèbe, *Tocsin pour un massacre. La saison de Saint-Bathélemy* (Paris, 1968), ch.ix.

<sup>95</sup> Moreau, *Histoire du protestantisme à Tournai*, pp. 142-3; between 1557 and 1559 nine residents of Valenciennes enrolled as *habitants* of Geneva, yet only two Protestants from Flanders had registered before 1566. P. F. Geisendorf, *Le livre des habitants de Genève* (2 vol., Geneva, 1957-63) and Decavele, *De dageraad*, I, 330.

before the outbreak of hostilities, though the Catholic townspeople, unlike their counterparts in the towns of northern France, were as yet too cowed to meet insult with injury.<sup>96</sup> The contrast between the strongly protestantized towns and a countryside still preponderantly Catholic is more typical of France north of the Loire than of the Low Countries. It is, of course, true that the Reformation had made little genuine headway among the rural population generally in the Low Countries, except where proximity to a large market-town or the presence of the fisheries and textile industry challenged the supremacy of agriculture, as was the case in the Flemish Westerkwartier and its Walloon adjunct, the Pays de l'Alleu, as well as in Voorne and Waterland in Holland. Yet the smallholders rarely defied Protestantism, save in Artois and Hainaut, where the rural inhabitants were prepared to stand up for their Catholic convictions. For example, they more than once delayed heretical assemblies to the authorities and in 1566 bloodily repulsed bands of iconoclasts, who elsewhere met little or no resistance.<sup>97</sup>

In both Tournai and Valenciennes the new religion exercised a strong attraction for the whole spectrum of urban society, though few clergy joined the Protestant ranks after 1531.<sup>98</sup> Between 1559 and 1573, some 630 persons were prosecuted as heretics or rebels in Valenciennes. The occupations of 346 are known.<sup>99</sup> Given the central importance of the cloth industry – there were said to be between 1,600 and 1,700 small master weavers in a population of around 12,000 –<sup>100</sup>

<sup>96</sup> See D. Richet, 'Aspects socio-culturels des conflits religieux à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, XXXII (1977), 764-89. A Tournaisien observed that no one molested the crowds coming away from the hedge services around the town, whereas Huguenots in France had sometimes been set upon by Catholics as they returned from the *presches*. *Mémoires de Pasquier de le Barre et de Nicholas Soldoyer pour servir à l'histoire de Tournai, 1565-1570* (ed. A. Pinchart, 2 vol., Brussels, 1859-65), I, 75-6.

<sup>97</sup> E.g., *Le journal d'un bourgeois de Tournai. Le second livre des chroniques de Pasquier de le Barre, 1500-1565* (ed. G. Moreau, Brussels, 1975), pp. 414, 420-1; E. Mahieu, 'Le protestantisme à Mons des origines à 1575', *Annales du cercle archéologique de Mons*, LXVI (1966-7), 180-1; J. Scheerder, *De beeldenstorm* (Bussum, 1974), pp. 20, 35, 49, 51.

<sup>98</sup> G. Moreau, 'La corrélation entre le milieu social et professionnel et le choix de religion à Tournai' in *Bronnen voor de religieuze geschiedenis van België*, pp. 289, 293.

<sup>99</sup> Based on P. J. Leboucq, *Histoire des troubles advenues à Valenciennes à cause des hérésies* (ed. A. P. L. de Robaulx de Soumoy, Brussels and the Hague, 1864); C. Paillard, *Histoire des troubles religieux de Valenciennes* and C. Muller, *La réforme à Valenciennes pendant la révolution des Pays-Bas, 1565-1573* (Liège, licence en histoire, 1973-4). Professor Moreau kindly arranged for me to consult this thesis. No account has been taken of those prosecuted for their part in the rebellion in 1572, unless there is evidence that they had been involved in the events of 1566-7.

<sup>100</sup> G. W. Clark, *An Urban Study during the Revolt of the Netherlands: Valenciennes 1540-1570* (Columbia Ph.D., 1972), pp. 15, 39-40.

it is hardly surprising to discover that fully one-third of those prosecuted worked in this sector, the majority earning a livelihood as serge and linen weavers and woolcombers. Slightly less than half were employed in the other main sectors: in the building trades, metalworking, chandlery, clothing, victualling. The professional classes, on the other hand, were poorly represented, with only one schoolmaster and no physicians or lawyers,<sup>101</sup> a fact which may reflect simply the relative absence of a vigorous intellectual life in Valenciennes. At Tournai the pattern of support was broadly similar, though there the *prudents* included some leading officials and lawyers.<sup>102</sup>

Yet the economic and social structure of these towns provides no obvious explanation for the success enjoyed by the Reformation there. Lille, though larger, also depended on numerous small master weavers.<sup>103</sup> In all three towns, the new draperies had been introduced and organized under guilds, which, however, enjoyed no political power.<sup>104</sup> Why then should Protestantism go from strength to strength in Valenciennes and Tournai, when the heretics in Lille had been forced on to the defensive by 1555? Lille, it has been suggested, was distinguished by the stability of its governing *élite* in which both the great merchants and the *rentiers* were represented. At Valenciennes, by contrast, the town government failed to mirror the economic hierarchy. Power remained with the *magistrat*, many of whose members were *rentiers*, despite the complaints of merchants aggrieved at their exclusion. This tension favoured Protestantism. The ruling faction was faced with a dilemma by the anti-heresy edicts. These infringed the chartered privileges of Valenciennes and failure to

<sup>101</sup> *Analysis by Occupation of those Prosecuted for Heresy and Sedition at Valenciennes, 1559-1573*

	<i>Number Employed</i>	<i>% of 346*</i>
Cloth Industry	131 (including 14 merchants)	37.8%
Clothing	38	10.9%
Victualling	37	10.6%
Building Trades	31	8.9%
Metalworking	23	6.6%
Other Trades/Crafts	28	8.4%
Services/Transport	24	6.9%
Merchants (unspecified)	21	6.0%
Professions	18	5.2%
Magistrates, Officials	18	5.2%

\* In all 369 occupations are recorded, several having two employments or an office with a craft.

<sup>102</sup> Moreau, 'La corrélation' pp. 286-99.

<sup>103</sup> R. Saint-Cyr Duplessis, *Urban Stability in the Netherlands Revolution. A Comparative Study of Lille and Douai* (Columbia Ph.D., 1974), pp. 88-110.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 318-30; Clark, *An Urban Study*, pp. 27, 30.

uphold the privileges would leave the *magistrat* exposed to criticism from the merchants, whereas refusal to enforce the edicts would forfeit the trust of Brussels. Until December 1566 merchants and *magistrat* sank their political differences in order to forward the town's interests, but once Valenciennes was declared to be in a state of rebellion, most of the *magistrat* went, leaving the great merchants in control of the Calvinist-dominated town.<sup>105</sup> In other words, the Reformation at Valenciennes profited from a split between the political and mercantile *élites*. The history of the Reformation at Amsterdam offers a close parallel. There power was concentrated in the hands of the zealous Catholics after 1538, but in 1564 this clique was confronted by a powerful alliance of great merchants and entrepreneurs, irritated because they could not exercise political influence commensurate with their wealth. During 1566 the Protestants and the *doleanten*, as the political dissidents in Amsterdam were known, moved closer to one another. When, in 1578, the ruling oligarchy was overthrown, the way was clear for the triumph of Reformed Protestantism.<sup>106</sup>

In both Valenciennes and Tournai the well-being of the community came to be closely identified with the cause of Reformed Protestantism. This remarkable state of affairs may be ascribed to the irritation aroused in the towns, oversensitive to outside interference, by the maladroit enforcement of the central government's policy. As early as 1544 Brussels had been concerned about the complacency of those responsible for the prosecution of the heretics.<sup>107</sup> Special inquisitorial commissions were sent then, and again in 1561, to sit alongside the local magistrates and ensure that the edicts were enforced punctually.<sup>108</sup> The crowning insult came in 1563. Angered by the insolence of the Protestants, who had organized outdoor services, Brussels concluded that the local magistrates were neither willing nor able to keep order in these strategically important frontier towns. Accordingly, garrisons were inflicted on both. Though calm was restored, the leading *bourgeois*, already incensed at the violation of their privileges, regarded the soldiers, and the authority they represented, with repugnance. In this way the inhabitants came to view the religious policy of Philip II as a greater threat to their privileges and property than the Protestantism of their fellow townsmen.<sup>109</sup>

During the winter of 1565-6 the political and religious dissidents

<sup>105</sup> Clark, *An Urban Study*, pp. 59-75, 120-30, 218-65, 364-80, 417-22.

<sup>106</sup> For the convergence of political and religious dissidents at Amsterdam in the 1560s see Van Nierop, *Beeldenstorm en burgerlijk verzet*, esp. ch.iii.

<sup>107</sup> Moreau, *Histoire du protestantisme à Tournai*, p. 106.

<sup>108</sup> Clark, *An Urban Study*, pp. 202-4, 224-9.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 247-65.

tried to devise a common programme, based on mutual horror of that conveniently protean nightmare – the ‘Inquisition’. The growing political maturity of this ‘opposition’ was reflected in the contemporary vocabulary, for the disaffected gentry as well as the committed Protestants came to be known collectively as the *gueux*. Only a few years earlier French Protestantism had undergone a similar metamorphosis, from which its adherents emerged as *huguenots*. We should not deceive ourselves, however, about the tensions that remained between the *gueux d’état* and the *gueux de religion*. In any case, the degree of politicization was far from uniform: weakest in the non-patrimonial provinces, it was most advanced in Tournai and Valenciennes.

The politicization of the Reformation that occurred in these towns can be paralleled by the case of La Rochelle. This stronghold of French Protestantism only entered into an alliance with Condé in 1568, after having suffered a Catholic garrison. Traditionally, the Rochelais had secured their municipal autonomy by negotiation with the Crown, but they had been reluctantly driven to the conclusion that their privileges would be better protected by the Huguenot leader.<sup>110</sup> The tragedy of Valenciennes and Tournai was that at this stage William of Orange was unwilling, and Hendrik van Brederode unable, to play the role of Condé.<sup>111</sup> Ironically, the Protestants of Valenciennes refused offers of aid from Condé in the expectation that the great nobility of the Low Countries would give them political and military support. When this failed to arrive, the Calvinist rebellion became a lost cause.

It would be foolish to suppose that the history of the urban Reformation in the Low Countries can be told in terms of the three patterns outlined here. The diversity of constitutions, and of economic and social structures, to be found among the forty or so chief towns rules that out. Besides the thriving commercial cities, there were towns that lived from the manufacture of specialized cloths. Others derived their prosperity from salt, brewing or the herring fisheries, or served as markets for the sale of dairy produce or grain. There were Hanseatic towns in the north-east, seats of government like Brussels, Mechelen and The Hague, bloated villages like Hondshoote that had grown in

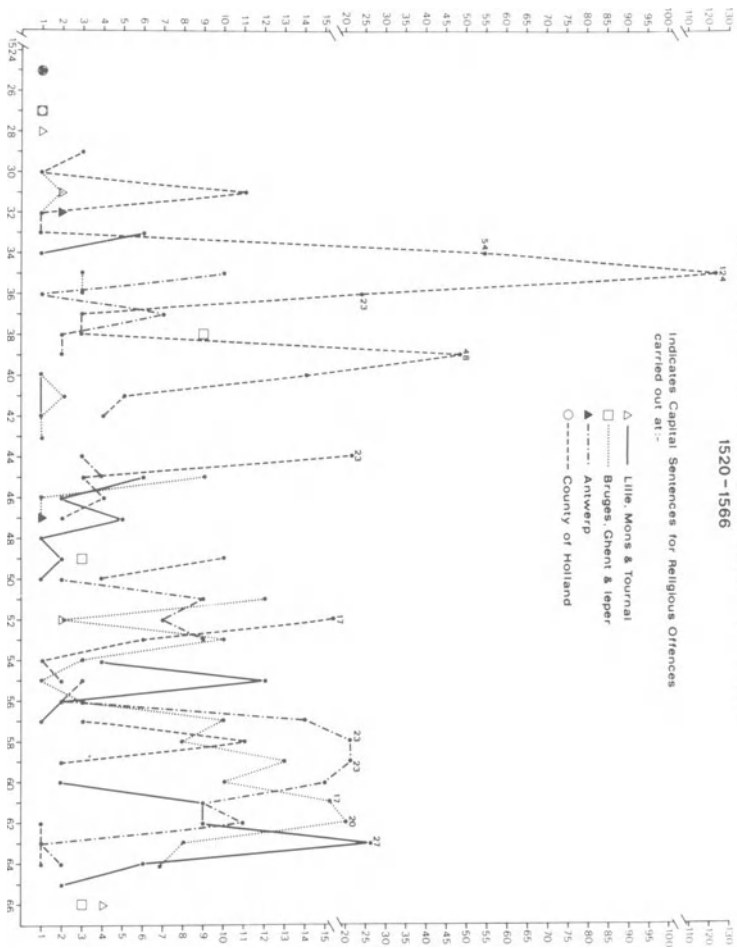
<sup>110</sup> J. C. Pugh Meyer, *Reformation in La Rochelle: Religious Change, Social Stability and Political Crisis, 1500-1568* (Iowa Ph.D., 1977), esp. ch. iv-v.

<sup>111</sup> Early in 1567 Brederode was recognized by the Reformed Churches of the Low Countries as their *chef*, a position reminiscent of the protector generalship to which Condé was appointed by the Reformed Churches of France. See R. C. Bakhuizen van den Brink, ‘Hendrik van Brederode en Willem van Oranje in 1566 en 1567’ in *Cartons voor de geschiedenis van den Nederlandschen vrijheidsoorlog* (2 vol., The Hague, 1891-8), II, 184-5.

disorderly haste, *villes aux églises* like Utrecht, where the local gentry were entrenched in the powerful chapters. There were towns, especially in the north-east, where the guilds or burghers still retained a measure of political influence, many more where the corporation was controlled by a quite small number of closely related families. Each had its traditions and privileges, each stood in a different relationship to the central government.

By no means all these towns proved receptive to the Reformation. Douai, Arras, St. Omer, Mons, Gouda, Utrecht, Amersfoort and Groningen, to list but a few, were only lightly affected, though it would be safe to suppose that most towns, by 1566, contained significant Protestant or protoprotestant minorities. The urban magistrates in the Habsburg Netherlands, even had they so wished, could not permit the Protestants to worship openly, except when the central government was paralysed, as happened briefly in the summer of 1566. Yet neither did they respond uniformly or consistently to the religious policy of Charles V. At Mons, Lille and Douai the magistrates seem to have done the bidding of the central government, possibly because they believed that their economic interests would thus be better served. In other towns the magistrates effectively frustrated the anti-heresy legislation out of dislike for the edicts themselves, or out of fear for disorder, or occasionally out of sympathy for the religious outlook of the evangelicals. All urban magistrates alike were bound to work for the maintenance of order, uphold the privileges, and seek the material and spiritual well-being of their community. They judged both the Reformation and the religious policy of the government from this perspective. Opportunities for the Reformation were most favourable where and when the Protestants gained the backing of the civil authorities or, failing that, of some powerful lobby in the town. For that reason Reformed Protestantism had carried the day briefly at Tournai and Valenciennes; but equally the suppression of the Reformation in these towns in 1567 shows that Protestantism, unless it were to become politicized on an altogether grander scale, could not hope to succeed in the prince's despite.

# CAPITAL SENTENCES FOR RELIGIOUS OFFENCES 1520-1566



### 3. The Family of Love (Huis der Liefde) and the Dutch Revolt

N. MOUT

#### I

THE Family of Love has been called an anti-political sect. The ideal of its adherents was, so it seems, a quiet life of study, spiritualist piety and contemplation, in a turbulent and bellicose world – on which they closed their doors.<sup>1</sup> The mental world of, for instance, Plantin and other distinguished Familists combined the spiritualist teachings of Nicolaes and later Barrefelt with the practical wisdom of neo-stoicism. Yet active participation in politics and society was entirely in keeping with the stoic precepts. Plantin and his associates lived in a troubled time and their careers show they were not afraid of being actively engaged. One cannot help but be struck by the dispassionate way they discussed in their correspondence everyday political events, even although these were often very unsettling, and of course, the ease with which they could if necessary conform to the established Church and the dominant party in the country or city where they were living. It has been pointed out that the attitude of the Familists ought not to be interpreted as political opportunism. On the contrary their approach was based on the profound conviction that all the Churches would be quite unimportant at the end of the world, when it would be apparent that no single Church was the true congregation of Christ but that all of them would be embodied in a single celestial harmony.<sup>2</sup> Already in his earliest writings Nicolaes heralded the 'last age of time', in which God had sent him, H. N. a *Hillige Nature* (Holy Creature), to instruct mankind in the principal dogma of Love and Charity. His major work, *De Spiegel der Gerechtigheid* (Mirror of Justice, probably printed by

<sup>1</sup> B. Rekers, *Benito Arias Montano 1527-1598. Studie over een groep spiritualistische humanisten in Spanje en de Nederlanden, op grond van hun briefwisseling* (Groningen 1961), p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> N. Mout, 'Political and Religious Ideas of Netherlanders at the Court in Prague', *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae* IX (1976), 7-10, with lit.

Plantin in Antwerp c. 1556), abounds in apocalyptic language and contains extremely interesting emblematic images. Other emblems, printed on a single sheet or illustrating some of his tracts, are certainly of a later date (after 1573). One of them has the motto – in the Low German dialect used by Niclaes –: ‘Nun geit idt Gerichte over de Werlt’ (now is the world judged) and depicts two warring parties on and under a globe. There is a doggerel printed under it, saying ‘the world with its havoc and rebellion, sin, death, devil and hell, is fighting gloriously against the Lamb, but the Lamb is victorious’.<sup>3</sup> This eschatological concern lies, in my opinion, at the heart of Niclaes’ outlook on life. And although the Dutch church historian Lindeboom wrote disparagingly about ‘the sultry dusk of theosophy and apocalypse enveloping his (i.e. Niclaes’) apostolic and spiritualist ideas’,<sup>4</sup> the eschatology is essential for understanding political ideas in Familist writings.

The disciples of the Family of Love devoted special attention when studying the Bible to the description of the Second Coming and also, of course, the book of Revelation. Their diligent study of Revelation was bound up with their conviction that the end of the world was at hand. This conviction was shared by prophets like Niclaes and Barrefelt, who would proclaim the Second Coming of Christ and prepare the world for it and whose message had the same authority as that of their Old Testament predecessors. Plantin expressed his belief that the end was near in florid sentences:

‘The time is nigh or has already come, the marvellous time when the Lord God will cleanse his threshing-floor and purify his holy temple and set up his throne among men (...) Let us therefore go forth cheerfully in the grace proclaimed in God’s name and abandon our worldly desires so that we may commit ourselves wholly to the inscrutable Light of eternal life.’<sup>5</sup>

This passage provides the link between the two leading ideas in Familist circles: their eschatological concern and their Christian neo-stoicism. A contempt for earthly things, arising from the eschatology, was combined dialectically with a cheerful acceptance of human existence. As the elect, who would witness the end of time, they were

<sup>3</sup> The apocalyptic images and emblems are described by H. Nippold in his fundamental article ‘Heinrich Niclaes und das Haus der Liebe’, *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie* XXXII (1862), 530-1; cf. also H. de la Fontaine Verwey, ‘De geschriften van Hendrik Niclaes’, *Het Boek* XXVI (1940-2), 181.

<sup>4</sup> J. Lindeboom, *Stiefkinderen van het Christendom* (The Hague, 1929), p. 204: ‘den zwoelen theosofisch apocalyptischen schemer, die zijn apostolische en spiritualistische denkbeelden omringt.’

<sup>5</sup> Plantin to Arias Montano, 22-10-1575, quoted by Rekers, *Montano* 153, English translation, p. 79.

free until that great day came to secure their lives by whatever means. The spectacular conversion of Lipsius to Catholicism and Plantin's no less spectacular move to Leiden in 1583 and back to Antwerp two years later, can best be considered in this context.

But contempt for the world is one thing, avoiding persecution and martyrdom another; the times were troubled and a person could be made to suffer for his beliefs – or for what the authorities thought his beliefs to be – whether he wanted it or not. Niclaes' writings, no less than neo-stoical doctrines, provided guidance and precepts for everyday life and right Familist attitudes towards civil and ecclesiastical authorities in general, persecution and party-strife in particular. Niclaes had personal experience of persecution and fell several times under suspicion of heresy, although he had always tried to lead an inconspicuous life. But God had miraculously protected him and saved him from his enemies: *Caritas vincit omnia*. Persecution remained a theme in his writings, however; there is even an emblem, showing him and his followers pursued by enemies, turning to God for protection.<sup>6</sup> A confession of three English Familists (1580), summing up the tenets of the Family of Love, put it as follows:

'(Th)ey ought not to suffer their bodyes to be executed bycause (they are) the temples of the holly gost/ (They) may lawfully deny religion of faithe before any/ (i)f ther be any cause of persecution/ (...).'<sup>7</sup>

The idea of the unimportance of the visible Church, leading to Nicodemism – conforming outwardly to the established religion while concealing one's real faith – was introduced into the Netherlands mainly through the works of Sebastian Franck which influenced deeply such spiritualists as Niclaes, Davis Joris and also Coornhert.<sup>8</sup> It became the official policy of the Family of Love, whose

<sup>6</sup> Nippold, 'Heinrich Niclaes' 331 n. 23.

<sup>7</sup> J. Hitchcock, 'A Confession of the Family of Love, 1580', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* XLIII (1970), 85-6.

<sup>8</sup> C. Ginzburg, *Il nicodemismo. Simulazione e dissimulazione religiosa nell' Europa dell' 500* (Turin, 1970), pp. 125-51; B. Becker, 'Nederlandsche vertalingen van Sebastiaan Francks geschriften', *Nederlandsch archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* (NAK) n.s. XXI (1928), 149-60. Similarities between Franck's ideas and the writings of Niclaes and Coornhert were already signalled in 1562, when the Reformed minister Gerhard Nicolai adapted and translated Bullinger's book against the Anabaptists (cf. H. Fast, *Heinrich Bullinger und die Taufer* (Weierhof, 1959), pp. 68-9; S. Cramer, 'Gerardus Nicolai's inlasschingen in het vertaalde werk van Bullinger: "Teghens de wederdoopers"', in *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica, Geschriften uit den tijd der hervorming in de Nederlanden* (ed. S. Cramer and F. Pijper, 10 vol., The Hague, 1903-14), VII 267-487). B. Becker, 'Nicolai's inlassing over de Franckisten', in: *NAK* n.s. XVIII (1925), 288-96 shows that Nicolai was not attacking so much Franck as Coornhert's *Verschooninghe vande Roomsche Afgoderye* (1560).

prophet Nicolaes, moreover, warned emphatically against disputing with fanatics and ‘men of low moral standards’ – by whom he probably meant anyone prepared to betray the Familist to the authorities.<sup>9</sup> Not without truth the *Successio anabaptistica* (1612), an attack on Anabaptists and related groups like the Familists, stated that the followers of Nicolaes adapted themselves to all men and deemed themselves so perfect that they were allowed to keep any company and profess any faith.<sup>10</sup> At the time their attitude was considered by many Catholics and Protestants alike as vacillatory and condemned as a pernicious example of laodiceanism in political and religious matters. The Reformed minister Adrianus Saravia wrote in his well-known letter about Lipsius and the Family of Love:

‘When the faithful were hounded in so many ways, these men never had any cause for fear; when all the faithful had been expelled and gone into exile, they remained quietly in the peace of their house.’<sup>11</sup>

To put it so strongly was not quite fair. If Familists were found out, they had good reason to fear persecution from both the Catholic Church and the Protestants. Coornhert no doubt was justified when he introduced as one of the speakers in his strong attack on Familism, *Spiegelhelken vande ongerechtigheyt* (Little mirror of injustice, 1581) *Hatighe partydicheyt* (Hostile partiality), who advocated the persecution, if not the execution, of the adherents of the sect.<sup>12</sup>

The general attitude towards public authority recommended by Nicolaes to his followers was one of obedience and submission, in conformity with the well-known maxim that all power comes from God, who invests princes and magistrates with it, and to resist them would be against God’s commandments. The last sentence of the English Familist confession cited before, reading ‘(The)r ought not to be any maiestarts (magistrates?) amongst crystyans’,<sup>13</sup> is – if the crucial word is indeed magistrates or perhaps majesties – not in

<sup>9</sup> (Hendrick Nicolaes), *Den Spiegel der gherechticheit* Book IV f. 6v-7v (The *Spiegel* is cited here and elsewhere according to the copy of Leiden University Library, 1370 B 21).

<sup>10</sup> *Successio anabaptistica, Dat is Babel der Wederdopers, Door V.P.* (1612), in *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica* VII, 56: ‘Dese seckt voecht haer tot alle menschen, en syn quantsuys soe perfect, dat niemants ommegang off ghelooft, iae exercitie haer en hindert.’

<sup>11</sup> Adrianus Saravia to Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, 20-10-1608, cf. H. van Crombruggen, ‘Een brief van Adriaan Saravia over Lipsius en ‘Het Huis der Liefde’, *De Gulden Passer (GP)* XXVIII (1950), 110-7.

<sup>12</sup> Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert, *Spiegelhelken vande ongerechtigheyt ofte mensche-licheyt des vergodeten HN Vader van den Huyse der Liefden* (1581), First Dialogue.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. note 7.

keeping with Nicolaes' teachings. The prophet was all for earthly authority and government, even inviting all magistrates to join the Family of Love in order to end violence, strife and war.<sup>14</sup> The Familist way of dealing with the government is very well expressed in the two last stanzas of an English Familist ballad (1574):

'Let us obeye the Governours,  
And lyue under their Lawes  
And eake to them all Tribute paye  
Eauen for the Peaces cause  
Yet Love is free, Though shee agree,  
That they shall have such thyng  
And what is right, To God almight,  
That must wee to hym brynge.

In stilness thus let us go-fourth  
(With Thankfulnes amonge)  
Wyth fewe Woordes, as wee are taught,  
And thus I ende my Song.  
In Loves Bande, Hande-in-hande;  
Let us proceed on still.  
O Israell, Take this well,  
As out of my Goodwill.'<sup>15</sup>

So it seems that in practical life Nicolaes – and later Barrefelt – advocated a quiet, inconspicuous life, conforming to whatever civil and ecclesiastical authorities demanded of their subjects in order to avoid persecution, martyrdom and involvement in the political and religious disputes of the time. Yet the Familists should live according to Christian morality and virtue, as their alleged sinlessness was never – whatever the opponents might say – interpreted by them as a licence to sin and immorality. Whenever they found themselves in a situation where morality dictated a choice between two alternatives – for instance when they were drawn, against their will, into a quarrel with political and religious overtones – they should act according to the moral precepts of spiritualist Christianity. For many of Nicolaes' educated adherents their practical recommendations meant a welcome affirmation of their own eirenic and pacifist tendencies, concurring with neo-stoicism, which insisted that men should practice virtue

<sup>14</sup> *Spiegel* Book II f. 47v: 'Kompt hierher tho den dienst der Liefden/ unde spiegelt juw dem Spiegel der Gerechtigheit/ alle ghy Overicheden offte Regenten deiser werlt/ unde keret juw aff van allem gewelde/ twist/ kryge ofte oorloge/ unde van alle verderflickheit/ dar ghy de olde verdorvene werlt inne gedenct/ unde mede vorgestaen hebben: unde begest juw met demüdigén herten tho de Liefde.'

<sup>15</sup> Published by J. A. van Dorsten, *The Radical Arts. First Decade of an Elizabethan Renaissance* (2nd edn., Leiden and London, 1973), p. 31 fig. 1.

under the guidance of reason. In Familist tenets eschatology and stoic morality have not been such strange bedfellows.

Niclaes' invitation to all magistrates to become members of the Family of Love was meant to be an exhortation to them to end all party-strife, of which the period was so full. On the one hand Niclaes regarded this condition of political and religious confusion as a sure sign that the end of time was near, on the other hand he used it as a justification for the existence of the Family of Love. The discord in religious matters made necessary such a body of true believers, who considered themselves to be above the parties. In Familist theology the regrettable party-strife was, of course, a consequence of the Fall. Religious unity and peace, realized on the eve of the last days through an invisible congregation like the Family of Love, was highly desirable for mankind suffering under the strains of war and rebellion. This point was driven home again and again in Familist writings; it takes pride of place, for instance, in the Preface to the *Spiegel der Gerechtigheid*.<sup>16</sup> Niclaes' answer to *partijschap* (party-strife) and persecution was *lijdzzaamheiden gelatenheid*, that is, patience. It is one of the central ideas in many of his writings, from the early tract *Van dat geestlicke Landt der Belofften* (On the Promised Land of the Spirit, 1546) to *Terra Pacis*, printed in Cologne in the 1570s.<sup>17</sup> Patience was also a favourite theme in neo-stoicist writings. But patience did not prevent the Familists from propagating their beliefs through the assiduous use of the printing-press, secretly publishing a good many books, broad-sheets and tracts, in prose and poetry, endlessly revised and re-edited over the years.<sup>18</sup> These activities, of course, often brought them into conflict with the authorities whom they would so willingly obey in other matters. They were fully aware, notwithstanding their aloofness from the world, of the power of the printed word, through which they tried to spread their ideas about Charity as a panacea for all the troubles that beset mankind. One of the troubles, in Niclaes' opinion, was Protestantism. He abhorred the Reformation, considering Protestants as objectionable sectarians and schismatics, whose only effect had been the replacing of Catholic ceremonies by far worse ones. In his opinion the old ceremonies should be observed until the rites of the Family of Love had been universally accepted – which portended for him the immediate prelude to the Second Coming and the end of things.<sup>19</sup> He deplored wars of religion, propagating religious peace and

<sup>16</sup> *Spegel* Vorrede (Preface), f. 2r.

<sup>17</sup> Nippold, 'Heinrich Niclaes', *passim*; for bibliographical details De la Fontaine Verwey, 'De geschriften van Hendrik Niclaes'.

<sup>18</sup> De la Fontaine Verwey counts 116 works in his bibliographical survey 'De geschriften van Hendrik Niclaes', including revisions and re-editions.

<sup>19</sup> A. Hamilton, 'Hiël and the Hiëlists: the doctrine and followers of Hendrik

liberty, although like and Old Testament prophet, he did not scruple to threaten mankind with reprobation and eternal death if they resisted conversion to true Christianity, offered to them by the Family of Love.<sup>20</sup> But at the heart of Familist tenets there was a genuine eirenicism and pacifism, most eloquently expressed by Plantin, who wrote:

'Ce n'est pas par les armes que les perturbations actuelles pourront finir, mais par les sentiments plus humains, par la charité, par l'amour du prochain.'<sup>21</sup>

After those edifying words we should turn to practical matters and examine the situation of Familism on the eve of the Dutch Revolt.

## II

One of the problems that immediately presents itself when studying the Family of Love and its links with the Dutch Revolt is best expressed in the question: 'who was a Familist?' Who was an outright member of the sect, who only a sympathetic outsider, who might either become an opponent of the Familists or join their ranks?

The sect existed from c. 1540 onwards and succeeded more or less in keeping its secrets until the late 1550s. In 1559 the consistory protocols of the Emden Calvinist Church mention two booklets, written by a Protestant from Breda against Hendrick Niclaes and his beliefs, and in the 1560s several persons were accused, rightly or wrongly, of being Familists.<sup>22</sup> We do not know much about Niclaes' early followers; the seventeenth-century Dutch church historian Gerard Brandt claimed that most of them were Mennonites from East Friesland.<sup>23</sup> During Niclaes' stay at Emden (1540-60) he was supported by the East Frisian noble Huycke Manninga, who later played an active part in the iconoclastic riots and in 1567 became a supporter and subsidizer of William of Orange and his army.<sup>24</sup> Probably most of Niclaes' adherents must be sought among his social equals, the merchants of Emden and elsewhere. It is not improbable, for instance, that a man like Johan Gaillart, a merchant from Bruges who came to Emden in 1555 and opened a large printing-shop there, was a Familist.

Jansen van Barrefelt', *Quaerendo* VII (1977), 245, who points especially to the revised version of Niclaes' *Evangelium Regni*.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. for instance *Spegel (Figuer des Geistelicken Tabernakels* f. 48r-v) and *passim*.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted by C. Clair, *Christopher Plantin* (London 1960), p. 141.

<sup>22</sup> H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'The Family of Love' *Quaerendo* VI (1976), 229-31.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, 229.

<sup>24</sup> Hamilton, 'Hiël and the Hiëlists', 247.

He was outwardly a Calvinist but with strong spiritualist leanings, translating works by Franck, Erasmus and also Calvin into Dutch, while the editing of the well-known Anabaptist martyrology *Het Offer des Heeren* (The Lord's Sacrifice, Emden, 1562) is sometimes attributed to him.<sup>25</sup> The sect spread to other parts of the Netherlands as a result of proselytizing business trips of Niclaes. Coornhert, who knew him personally, described how he tried to win souls for the Family of Love.<sup>26</sup>

Niclaes, who was by trade a mercer and quite a prosperous businessman, had entrée into the world of high finance and of the wealthy merchants of Antwerp, where he made more than one convert. It is assumed that Plantin founded his business there (1555) with financial help from rich Antwerp merchants who were for the most part followers of Niclaes and outwardly Catholics or Calvinists. One of Plantin's tasks would be the printing of Niclaes' works. It is highly probable that he printed the *Spiegel der Gerechtigheid* and at least fifteen smaller works, which were all distributed in secret. He was certainly won for the sect in those years or even shortly before he came to Antwerp.<sup>27</sup> As far as Plantin is concerned, we are on sure ground, but it is impossible to say how numerous or how influential the sect was on the eve of the Dutch Revolt or at any other time. There is little evidence to sustain Van Dorsten's claim that the Family of Love 'attracted a numerous following in the Low Countries',<sup>28</sup> or that it was 'probably the largest sect of mystical spiritualists in Northern Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century'.<sup>29</sup> It is true, however, that Wilhelmus Lindanus, bishop of Roermond and inquisitor, wrote already in 1565 that Niclaes had many supporters,<sup>30</sup> and

<sup>25</sup> J. Decavele, *De dageraad van de reformatie in Vlaanderen (1520-1565)* (2 vol., Brussels, 1975), I, 341. Emden became a refuge for exiles from the Netherlands in the 1560s, cf. D. Nauta, 'Emden, toevluchtsoord van ballingen', in *De synode van Emden oktober 1571* (ed. D. Nauta et al., Kampen, 1971), pp. 7-21.

<sup>26</sup> Coornhert, *Spiegelhelken*, Preface.

<sup>27</sup> M. Rooses, *Christophe Plantin* (2nd edn., Antwerp, 1897), esp. pp. 59-76; L. Voet, *The Golden Compasses. A History and Evaluation of the Printing and Publishing Activities of the Officina Plantiniana at Antwerp* (2 vol., Amsterdam, London, New York, 1969-73), I, 21-30; De la Fontaine Verwey, 'The Family of Love', 231-4.

<sup>28</sup> Van Dorsten, *The radical arts*, p. 27.

<sup>29</sup> J. A. van Dorsten, 'Garter Knights and Familists', *Journal of European Studies* IV (1974), 183.

<sup>30</sup> Wilhelmus Damasi Lindanus, *Dubitantius de vera certaue... via* (Cologne, 1565), 38: 'Is (Niclaes) nunc magnas passim ducit colonias quibus Domus charitatis est insigne', quoted by H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Trois hérésiarques dans les Pays-Bas du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance (BHR)* XVI (1954), 321. Lindanus often quarrelled with Plantin and his circle about the orthodoxy of the Polyglot Bible and was consequently hated by the editors Arias Montano and Masius and by Plantin: all Familists, cf. P. T. van Beuningen, *Wilhelmus Lindanus als inquisiteur en bisschop* (Assen, 1966), pp. 413-4.

there is a letter written in 1584 by the Dutch diplomat Aggaeus Albada from which it could be gathered that he thought many magistrates in Holland were Familists.<sup>31</sup> But books attacking the Family of Love or categorizing Familism as a heresy are few and far between, especially before the 1570s. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Caspar Grevinchoven, one of the principal opponents of Familism, wrote in his book *Van de vryheydt der Secten* (On the Liberty of Sects, Dordrecht, 1611) that 'nowadays most belong to the sects', lumping together all sectarian movements including the Family of Love as Anabaptists.<sup>32</sup> But in my opinion the sect was never more than a very select group of 'cunning invisibilists' – as Coornhert said –,<sup>33</sup> recruiting its followers in the Netherlands mainly from the educated classes, and therefore not devoid of influence. Among its adherents were rich merchants like Caspar van Zurich (Jaspar van Zurck), members of the Van Bomberghen family, Luis Pérez and Fernando Ximenez (all of them, incidentally, financial backers of Plantin), the jeweller Jacob Hoefnagel sr. and his son, the miniature painter Joris Hoefnagel, intellectuals like Andreas Masius, Carolus Clusius, Benito Arias Montano, Justus Lipsius, Abraham Ortelius and possibly the historian Emanuel van Meteren. It is mainly from their correspondence and other sources in which they are mentioned that we may gain some notion of the influence the Family of Love exercised on the Dutch Revolt.

### III

According to the *Chronika des Hûs-gesinnes der Liefsten* an esoteric history of the sect written by 'Daniel', an elder, Nicolaes and his

<sup>31</sup> *Briefe des Aggaeus de Albada an Rembertus Ackema und andere, aus den Jahren 1579-1584* (ed. E. Friedländer, Leeuwarden, 1874), letter to Adriaan van der Mijle, one of Orange's advisers, Cologne, 1-9-1584, pp. 143-4: 'Plantinus nullam conscientiam habet in quibusvis etiam perniciosis libris imprimendis, qualis etiam Justi Lipsii professoris vestri liber est, 'de Constantia', sed ut salutarem aliquem librum imprimat, ibi mille praetexit excusationes. (*In margin:*) Tales sunt plaerique qui in Hollandia hodie gubernant. (*In text:*) 'Das Hauss der Liebe' coram Deo pessundat et privata et publica, etiamsi contrarium illi prae se ferant. Ex altera parte cognoscimus antichristum, sed in nostra nondum ita natus est, et est tamen. Quid igitur boni sperari protest?'

<sup>32</sup> Caspar Grevinchoven, *Van de vryheydt der Secten/ Hoe schadelijck deselve sij* (Dordrecht, 1611), p. 16: 'Men mochte oock wel seggen hedendaechs/ dat de Secten den grooten hoop waren/ wanneermen aensiet die veelheyt/ ende die verscheydenheyt haerer principalen ende hoofden/ als dat sy Muncerische, Munstersche, Vriesche, Vlaemsche, Waterlandische, Dreckwagen, Batenbergische, David Jorische, Henric Nicolaische, Adam Pastorische ende dergelijcken Doopbroederen genaemt worden...'

<sup>33</sup> Coornhert, *Spiegelken*, First Dialogue: 'arglistige invisibilisten'.

followers practised *patience* during the first stage of the Revolt. The *Chronika* and Nicolaes' no less esoteric spiritual biography, the *Acta HN.*, described the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt as a civil war caused by religious differences and stressed its terrible consequences. Although both manuscripts are totally lacking in dates they do mention in this context the troubles of 1566 and Alva's coming to the Netherlands. 'Daniel' thought the conduct of the Calvinist zealots in the outbreak of the Revolt especially reprehensible. The ensuing violence made Nicolaes leave the path of *patience*; following a divine revelation – in 1566 or the following year – he decided to leave the Netherlands, together with his twenty-four elders and four seraphins, for a 'country of peace', which turned out to be Cologne, a haven of refuge for so many Dutch exiles, both Protestant and Catholic. Nicolaes and his company must have arrived there somewhere between 1567 and 1570. Their journey is described in the *Acta HN.*: a trip with seven spiritual stages in seven weeks, alighting at seven inns, each symbolizing an aspect of the mystical journey towards God.<sup>34</sup>

They left behind the rank and file of their followers, among them the Antwerp circle of Plantin, his financiers and associates. We find their names on the lists of those suspected of Protestant leanings sent to the government by the spies Géronimo de Curiel and Philippe d'Auxy.<sup>35</sup> They were deeply involved in framing the *Petition* in the autumn of 1566, demanding religious liberty in exchange for three million gold florins. The definitive text was drafted in the house of Marcus Pérez, Calvinist brother of the Familist Luís Pérez; the *Instruction* for the collection of the money (December 1566) was signed by the Familist Carolus van Bomberghen, among others.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Chronika des Hüs-gesinnes der Liefsten: Daer-inne betuget wert, de Wunderwercken Godes tor lester tydt: unde idt iene dat HN. unde dem Hüs-gesinne der Liefsten, wederfaren is. Dorch Daniël, ein Mede-older mit HN. in dem Hüs-gesinne der Liefsten, am-dach gegeben*, Leiden University Library, ms. Ltk. 620: 59v-60v, 62v-65v, 92r-93r, 106v. *Acta HN. De Geschreften HN. unde etlicke Hemmelsche Werckinge des Heren unde Godes/ die HN. van syner Joeget ann, wedderfaren zynt. Dorch Zacharias, ein Mede-older in dem Hüs-gesinne der Liefsten am-dach gegeben*, Leiden University Library, ms. Ltk. 621: 37v-38r, 48r-49v.

<sup>35</sup> L. van der Essen, 'Episodes de l'histoire religieuse et commerciale d'Anvers dans la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Rapport secret de Géronimo de Cureil, facteur du roi d'Espagne à Anvers, sur les marchands hérétiques ou suspects de cette ville', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire* LXXX (1911), 321-62; L. van der Essen, 'Progrès du luthéranisme et du calvinisme dans le monde commercial d'Anvers et l'espionnage politique du marchand Philippe Dauxy, agent secret de Marguerite de Parme, en 1566-1567', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* XII (1914), 152-234; A. A. van Schelven, 'Verklikkersrapporten over Antwerpen in het laatste kwartaal van 1566', *Bijdragen en mededelingen van het historisch genootschap L* (1929), 238-320.

<sup>36</sup> A. A. van Schelven, 'Het verzoekschrift der drie millioen goudguldens', *Bijdragen voor vaderlandsche geschiedenis en oudheidkunde* 6e reeks, IX (1930), 1-42; J.

One of the arguments of the petition – which was, of course, never considered by Philip II – was based on the conviction held by these merchants that commercial life would benefit from religious tolerance.<sup>37</sup> The petition also defended the point that outlawing the ‘new religion’ would only harm the country, as it would inevitably lead to hypocrisy in religious matters, making the Dutch ‘people without religion, libertines and godless men, from whom one could not expect loyalty and sincerity in matters of conscience’.<sup>38</sup> The much debated problem whether the petitioners were sincere or whether they only aimed at collecting money for troops, under cover of demanding religious liberty, need not detain us here. In any case the moderates among them wanted to find a way out of the troubles caused by religious persecution, iconoclasm and political tension, which were harmful to their business interests, and thought that tolerance and liberty in matters of religion might be a possible solution. These ideas were wholly compatible with Familism.

In the meantime people like Plantin, Ortelius and Clusius wrote letters to their friends – including fellow-Familists – in which they vented their deep despair and their misgivings about the turbulent events in the Netherlands. Ortelius, for instance, was no friend of the government and his religious stance was equivocal, but he considered the iconoclastic riots as criminal and extremely harmful to the country.<sup>39</sup> In 1566 Clusius could see no end to the troubles and wrote apprehensively about field conventicles and the spread of Anabaptism in Flanders.<sup>40</sup> Plantin clearly foresaw the coming disasters and in a very pessimistic letter to his fellow-Familist Andreas Masius expressed his hope that the authorities would pursue a moderate course. Likening the troubles to an flood he wrote:

Scheerder, ‘Eenige nieuwe bijzonderheden betreffende het 3.000.000 goudgulden rekwist (1566)’, in *Miscellanea Historica in honorem Leonis van der Essen* (Brussels and Paris, 1947), pp. 559-66.

<sup>37</sup> Economic arguments for religious tolerance were often advanced during the first years of the Dutch Revolt, cf. E. Hassinger, ‘Wirtschaftliche Motive und Argumente für religiöse Duldsamkeit im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert’, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* XLIX (1958), 226-45.

<sup>38</sup> The *Petition* has been printed many times, for instance by Pieter Christiaensz. Bor, *Oorsprongk, begin en vervolg der Nederlandtsche Oorlogen* (4 vol., Amsterdam, 1679-84), I, Bk. III, 122-4.

<sup>39</sup> Ortelius in his frequent correspondence with Emmanuel van Meteren, cf. W. D. Verduyn, *Emanuel van Meteren* (The Hague, 1926), pp. 63-6. Cf. also R. Boumans, ‘The Religious Views of Abraham Ortelius’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* XVII (1954), 374-7.

<sup>40</sup> For instance Clusius’ letter to Johannes Crato von Crafftheim, Bruges, 29-11-1566, *Supplément à la correspondance de Christophe Plantin* (ed. M. van Durme, Antwerp, 1955), pp. 29-30.

'Car pour dire sincèrement mon advis, je prévoiy que si on ne donne un cours à ceste eau desbordée, qu'elle gastera les terres labourables de telle sorte que les habitants ne jouiront d'aucun fruit y croissant. Que si les cultivateurs et qui ont la terre en manient cuident (comme ils semblent bien avoir délibéré) de rejeter ceste inundation par force, je crains que cela ne se fera sans un extresme détrimet et perdition de biens corps et âmes de maints milliers de personnes, dont Dieu par sa grâce nous veuille conserver et garder à jamais.'<sup>41</sup>

Plantin was well aware of the fact that strife and violence would harm his business. Therefore in the summer of 1566 he decided – against Nicolaes' advice – to set up a secret press in Vianen, on the territory of Henry of Brederode, where the central government had no jurisdiction. There he could print for the new expanding market – of the Revolt. He sent his printer Augustijn van Hasselt – also a Familist – to Vianen, where the secret Plantin press functioned for only four or five months. But within that short span of time a number of very interesting pamphlets, all in the service of the Revolt, were published there: Marnix of St. Aldegonde's *Vraye narration et apologie des choses passées au Pays-Bas, touchant le fait de la religion*, Van Wesembeke's *Recueil des choses advenues en Anvers touchant le fait de la religion en l'an 1566* and De Brès *Declaration sommaire du faict de ceux de la ville de Valenciennes*. De la Fontaine Verwey suggests, though he cannot prove, that at Vianen Van Hasselt also printed tracts by Nicolaes.<sup>42</sup>

When the rebellion of 1566-7 ended in failure Plantin had grave misgivings about his Vianen annexe. He dreaded discovery and the accusation of heresy. Therefore he did his utmost to confirm his Catholic orthodoxy in letters to the Spanish secretary of the court Çayas, and to Cardinal Granvelle.<sup>43</sup> In order to cover up his – financial – connexion with the Family of Love in the 1550s, he propagated

<sup>41</sup> *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin* (ed. M. Rooses and J. Denucé, 9 vol., Antwerp, Ghent and The Hague, 1883-1918, III, 8-10.

<sup>42</sup> H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Hendrik van Brederode en de drukkerijen van Vianen', *Het Boek* XXX (1949-51), 33-5; cf. also the only letter of Plantin to Nicolaes that has been preserved, in: *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin* I, 157-60. For Henry of Brederode and the Revolt cf. H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Le rôle d'Henri de Brederode et la situation juridique de Vianen pendant l'insurrection des Pays-Bas', *Revue du Nord* 40 (1958), 297-302. Cf. also idem, 'Le siège de Valenciennes et l'imprimerie clandestine de Plantin à Vianen en 1566-67', *Revue Française d'histoire du livre* I (1971), 9-25.

<sup>43</sup> H. F. Bouchery, 'Aanteekeningen betreffende Chr. Plantin's houding op godsdienstig en politiek gebied', *GP* XVII (1940), 87-141; L. Voet, 'The Personality of Plantin', *GP* XXXIV (1956), 73-87; for Çayas and Plantin cf. Rekers, *Montano, passim*; for Granvelle and Plantin cf. M. van Durme, 'Plantin, Granvelle et quelques documents inédits ou non publiés dans la *Correspondance*', *GP* XXXIV (1956), 88-103. It has been alleged that Granvelle protected the Familists (cf. John Rogers, *The Displaying of an Horrible Secte, naming themselves the Family of Love*, London,

during Alva's governorship the well-known story that his infirmity, caused by an assault in the streets of Antwerp, had obliged him to leave his original trade and become a printer. Also the plan to publish the Polyglot Bible was launched by him with the express purpose to create a favourable impression on the Spanish authorities. This impressive publication, 'which after four centuries remains Plantin's chief glory, saved at the same time both his printing office and his head.'<sup>44</sup> Safety prompted him to break off all contacts with Niclaes, after having arranged that Van Hasselt move the Vianen press to Wesel and later probably to Cologne in order to work for the Family of Love. As far as we know Plantin never resumed direct contact with Niclaes, probably for safety's sake, but he did his best to help fellow-Familists or sympathizers, for instance the learned Andreas Masius and Guillaume Postel, whose share in the edition of the Polyglot Bible was kept a secret from the Spanish.<sup>45</sup> Meanwhile Niclaes had settled in Cologne and his sect attracted the attention of Petrus Colonius, minister of the Dutch Calvinist Church there, who wrote a letter to Theodorus Beza full of bitter complaints about the presence of Familists in that city.<sup>46</sup> The letter was written in 1570, the same year as Plantin published Alva's *Appendix* to the Spanish *Index* which included Niclaes' *Spiegel der Gerechtigheid*, a book he had in all probability printed himself.<sup>47</sup>

Under Alva the miniature painter Joris Hoefnagel,<sup>48</sup> son of a (1576) but there is no evidence for it save that Plantin remained on friendly terms with the Cardinal until his death (1584), notwithstanding the publication of a pamphlet against him in 1582 (*Diverses lettres interceptés*, also translated into Dutch) by the Officina Plantiniana, cf. M. van Durme, *Antoon Perrenot, bisschop van Arecht, kardinaal van Granvelle, minister van Karel V en van Filips II (1517-1586)* (Brussels, 1953), pp. 254-7, 345-6.

<sup>44</sup> Voet, 'The Personality of Plantin', 78.

<sup>45</sup> De la Fontaine Verwey, 'De geschriften van Hendrik Niclaes', 173-8; for the intimate friendship between Masius and Plantin cf. *Briefe von Masius und seinen Freunden* (ed. M. Lossen, Leipzig, 1886) and for Plantin and Postel cf. H. Bainton, 'Wylliam Postell and the Netherlands', *NAK* n.s. XXIV (1931), 161-72; W. J. Bouwsma, *Concordia Mundi. The Career and Thought of Guillaume Postel (1510-1581)* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), pp. 27-8.

<sup>46</sup> Published by H. de Vries van Heekelingen, *Genève pépinière du Calvinisme Hollandais* (2 vol., Fribourg and The Hague, 1918-24), II, 166.

<sup>47</sup> F. H. Reusch, *Die Indices Librorum Prohibitorum des sechszehnten Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen, 1886), p. 295: 'Henricus Nicolai, sive libri omnes H.N. signati, qui et sine loco et impressoris nomine sparguntur in vulgus', p. 300: 'Speculum iustitiae', (cf. C. Sepp, *Verboden lectuur. Een drietal Indices Librorum Prohibitorum* (Leiden, 1889), pp. 187-9). Later Niclaes was mentioned in the Munich *Index* of 1582, the *Index* of Sixtus V (1590) and Clemens VII (1596), cf. Reusch, pp. 347, 485, 554.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. for Joris Hoefnagel's life and works E. Chmelarz, 'Georg und Jakob Hoefnagel', *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses XVII* (1896), 275-90; T. A. G. Wilberg Vignau-Schuurman, *Die emblematischen Elemente im Werke Joris Hoefnagels* (2 vol., Leiden, 1969); N. Mout, *Bohemen en de Nederlanden in de zestiende eeuw* (Leiden, 1975), *passim*.

Familist and almost certainly one himself, composed an emblem book which betrayed an unmistakably spiritualist and neo-stoic stamp. It was, however, never published. The book, which was entitled *Patientia* drew on the Dutch Revolt for its inspiration and was commissioned in 1568-9 by Johan Radermacher, a wealthy merchant of Dutch extraction living in London. Posing as a convinced Calvinist he occupied a prominent place in the Dutch colony there, but he is known to have had very unorthodox leanings. He may also have been interested in the doctrines of the Family of Love, as there existed close ties between the Familist coterie at Antwerp and the group of Dutch artistic and scholarly *émigrés* in London around Radermacher. *Patientia*, using one of Niclaes' central ideas as a starting-point, is a political emblem book and as such it represents an entirely new genre, for which there are no contemporary parallels. Collections of *emble-mata politica* were not published until much later and most of these were intended for princes and not, as in the case of *Patientia*, for ordinary citizens who found themselves caught up in political developments while at the same time playing the part of compassionate but aloof spectators, as the Familists did. The final emblem in *Patientia* shows a banquet held at an inn: in the explanatory verse Hoefnagel commends 'the very best kind of patience' in true Familist fashion, in accordance with the eschatological and neo-stoical ideas current in this circle.<sup>49</sup> The image reminds us of Niclaes' predilection for inns during his spiritual journey, described in the *Acta HN*.. Another interesting work from that time is Philippe Galle's *Virorum doctorum de disciplinis bene merentium effigies XLIIII* (Antwerp 1572). Galle is thought to have been a Familist and his gallery of learned men includes a striking number of savants in the Erasmian tradition, many members of the Plantin circle and many Familists. The eulogies were written by Benito Arias Montano, the Spanish scholar who probably became a Familist and a follower of Barrefelt around 1573, together with Plantin and others.<sup>50</sup>

Montano, who was the editor of the Polyglot Bible was very much part of the spiritualist group at Antwerp. Through his good offices

<sup>49</sup> *Patientia. 24 politieke emblemata door Joris Hoefnagel* (ed. R. van Roosbroeck, Antwerp, 1935); Van Dorsten, *The Radical Arts*, 50-61; W. S. Heckscher-K.-A. Wirth, 'Emblem, Emblembuch', in: *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte* (6 vol., Stuttgart, 1959-70), V, 159-62; Mout, 'Political and Religious ideas', 16-9.

<sup>50</sup> M. Bataillon, 'Philippe Galle et Arias Montano. Matériaux pour l'iconographie des savants de la Renaissance', *BHR* II (1942), 132-60. It has been argued that another famous book of the period, Jan van der Noot's *Das Buch Extasis* (1576) shows Familist influence, but this is denied by others, cf. J. Wille, 'De godsdienstige denkbeelden van Jan van der Noot in zijn Keulse periode' in *Studies aangeboden aan prof. dr. Gerard Brom* (Utrecht and Nijmegen, 1952), pp. 223-44; C. A. Zaalberg, *Das Buch 'Extasis' van Jan van der Noot* (Utrecht, 1954), pp. 72-3.

men like Clusius and Ortelius received favours from the Spanish court and Plantin became royal *architypographus* (1570) and got his profitable monopoly for the sale of Spanish missals and breviaries. It was through Montano that members of the Family of Love reached the zenith of their political influence in government circles, because Montano was appointed – against Alva's advice – political adviser to the new Governor of the Netherlands, Requesens (1573-6). In conformity with Montano's propositions the Council of Troubles was abolished and the *Generaal Pardon* (General Amnesty) proclaimed (1574), from which, however, the leaders of the Revolt and about fifty others, among them Familists, were excluded. Requesens appointed many moderates to important offices on Montano's recommendation (the bishop of Antwerp Laevinus Torrentius, the censor Van der Steeghen) and the prominent Familist Luís Pérez lent the Governor then in financial difficulty, 6000 gold ducats (July, 1574) to help launch his conciliatory policy. After Requesens' untimely death Montano lost all political influence and was soon recalled to Spain, to the great regret of himself and his Antwerp friends. But one of his Spanish friends, Géronimo de Roda who acted as deputy Governor after Requesens' death, protected Plantin and his associates during the Spanish Fury (1576) and was probably instrumental in freeing Emanuel van Meteren from prison, where he had landed on the accusation of spying.<sup>51</sup>

The failure of the Pacification of Ghent ended all hope for a speedy peace and religious and political reconciliation between the Dutch provinces. The war went on, and many Antwerp Familists fled the Calvinist *régime* and went to Cologne; for instance Barrefelt himself, Luís Pérez and the etcher Johannes Sadeler. Pérez returned after the fall of Antwerp (1585) and Sadeler made a career at the court of the Emperor Rudolf II, posing as an orthodox Catholic.<sup>52</sup> Others stayed behind, like Plantin who flourished, not just financially but above all politically. Without betraying his belief in tolerance and peace he went over to the side of the Revolt, receiving William of Orange in his printing-shop and dedicating poems to him, and accepting an appointment as official printer to the States-General.<sup>53</sup> It is significant

<sup>51</sup> Rekers, *Montano*, Ch. ii and iv, *passim*. The role of Montano in Dutch politics was first elucidated by L. Morales Oliver, *Arias Montano y la política de Felipe II en Flandres* (Madrid, 1927) and in the Netherlands by J. Brouwer, *Montigny* (Amsterdam, 1941).

<sup>52</sup> F. Donnet, 'Les exilés anversoïis à Cologne (1582-1585)', *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale d'Archéologie de Belgique* 5e série, I (1898-1900), 288-355; for Cologne as a centre of spiritualism and eirenism cf. M. Nolte, *Georgius Cassander en zijn oecumenisch streven* (Nijmegen, 1951). For Pérez cf. Rekers, *Montano*, pp. 177-8, English translation pp. 99-100; for Sadeler cf. Mout, 'Political and Religious ideas', 2, 16.

<sup>53</sup> Voet, 'The Personality of Plantin'; R. M. Kingdon, 'Plantin and his Backers

that he printed in those years a number of books related to Familism. A Dutch translation of the *Theologica Deutsch* (1579 or 1580) was probably done by a member of the Familist Ximenez family – this book was especially dear to Barrefelt, who was deeply influenced by it.<sup>54</sup> For the benefit of Barrefelt's followers there appeared a Dutch translation by the famous linguist Cornelis Kiliaen of the *Homilies* by the Church Father Macarius the Egyptian. The introduction, full of spiritualist and eschatological ideas, might have been written by Plantin himself.<sup>55</sup> In secret Plantin printed a number of Barrefelt's works, and perhaps all of them.<sup>56</sup>

The Familists got a fresh chance to propagate their ideas about political and religious peace and reconciliation in the 1580s. In Anjou's entourage in France there were also Dutchmen who were Familists.<sup>57</sup> Lucas de Heere the gifted artist was certainly in touch with the Family of Love. He acted both as a poet and a designer in the *Joyeuse Entrée* of Anjou in Ghent, in which Anjou was represented as a *politique*, a standpoint which naturally appealed to members of the Family of Love, among others. It is interesting to see that after the French Fury (1583) a Reformed minister at Dordrecht, Henricus Corputius, suggested that Anjou's coup might have been the work of 'Libertines, Davidjorists and Familists', although he was not certain about it and asked for more information.<sup>58</sup> Plantin's move to Leiden in 1583 and back to Antwerp in 1585 might well have been inspired by disappointment about the failure of Anjou's policy in the Netherlands. In the 1580s Marnix of St. Aldegonde who, together with Orange, had given Anjou most support, wrote his attack on the spiritualists, who in his opinion were a danger to the state because of their Nicodemism,

1575-1590. A Study in the Problems of Financing Business during War', in *Mélanges d'histoire économique et sociale en hommage à Anthony Babel* (2 vol., Geneva, 1963) I, 303-16.

<sup>54</sup> B. Becker, 'De "Theologia Deutsch" in de Nederlanden der 16e eeuw', *NAK* n.s. XXI (1928), 161-90; H. D. L. Vervliet, 'Typographica Plantiniana I. Ter inleiding: de studie van het zestiende-eeuwse letterbeeld en het geval van "La théologie germanique" (Plantin 1558)', *GPXXXVII* (1959), 170-8.

<sup>55</sup> J. H. van de Bank, *Macarius en zijn invloed in de Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 1977), pp. 81-110.

<sup>56</sup> Hamilton, 'Hiël and the Hiëlists', 267-8.

<sup>57</sup> W. Kirsop, 'The Family of Love in France', *Journal of religious history* III (1974), 103-18.

<sup>58</sup> F. A. Yates, *The Valois tapestries* (London, 1959), *passim*; *Brieven uit onderscheidene kerkelijke archieven* (ed. H. Q. Janssen and J. J. van Toorenenbergen, 3 vol., Utrecht, 1877-1885), II, 239: 'Mogelick dat der kercke saecke nu wel wat meer beherticht sal worden, als te voren, oyck mede doir dese conspiratie, besonders indien Libertinen, Davidisten, Nicolaiten etc. daer inne mede plichtich sijn; des ick nyet weet, noch ter tijt geen sekerheyt hebbende, laet my van alles weten.' (Henricus Corputius to Arend Cornelisz., Dordrecht, 22-2-1583).

tolerance and their ideas about the relation between Church and State.<sup>59</sup> The book was only published in 1595 (*Ondersoekinghe ende grondelijcke wederlegginge der geestdrijvische leere*) (Investigation and Thorough Refutation of the Doctrines of the Enthusiasts) and from the polemics that followed it is clear that spiritualists were to be found even in government circles.<sup>60</sup>

After Anjou had left the Netherlands and Orange had been murdered the Familists seem to have lost all influence on political life. They had left the political stage and preferred a quiet, undisturbed life, apart from the short period (1580-1) when the minister of Utrecht, Hubert Duifhuis, backed by the town corporation, tried to realize his tolerant and invisibilist ideas which he, as a follower of Barrefelt, defended against the intolerant Calvinists of that city.<sup>61</sup> The centre of Familism had shifted from Antwerp and Cologne to Leiden, where the English printer Thomas Basson possibly continued Niclaes' printing office of Cologne, and where the University was a remarkably tolerant place. Dordrecht and Gouda also seem to have been centres.<sup>62</sup> Though Niclaes had died c. 1580 and Barrefelt died c. 1594, the Family of Love and its doctrines survived well into the seventeenth century. It remains however difficult to assess its importance in religious life and thought in the Dutch Republic.<sup>63</sup> However anti-political in theory the Family of Love was, in the sense that its members avoided taking sides, in practice at least some of the better-known Antwerp Familists played an active role during certain stages of the Revolt. They were champions of the conciliatory ideas held by the moderate centre party in the Dutch Revolt, and vainly opposed the growing polarization.<sup>64</sup> When this tendency could no longer be reversed, the political influence of the Familists dwindled to nothing. They had no wish to fight or to become martyrs for a lost cause and they chose the middle path which is the way to safety, or as Coornhert

<sup>59</sup> Filips Marnix van St. Aldegonde, *Ondersoekinghe ende grondelijcke wederlegginge der geestdrijvische leere*, (1595). The book betrays a good knowledge of the doctrines of Niclaes and Barrefelt by the author.

<sup>60</sup> C. Kramer, *Emmery de Lyere et Marnix de Ste Aldegonde. Un admirateur de Sébastien Franck et de Montaigne aux prises avec le champion des calvinistes néerlandais* (The Hague, 1971), esp. pp. 1-21.

<sup>61</sup> Hamilton, 'Hiël and the Hiëlists', 259-66.

<sup>62</sup> J. A. van Dorsten, *Thomas Basson 1555-1613, English Printer at Leiden* (Leiden, 1961), 61-6; H. de la Fontaine Verwey, 'Thomas Basson en het Huis der Liefde', *Het Boek XXXV* (1961-2), 219-24; C. C. de Bruin, 'Radicaal spiritualisme te Leiden', *Rondom het woord XVII* (1975), 66-81; De la Fontaine Verwey, 'The Family of Love', 254-9.

<sup>63</sup> De la Fontaine Verwey, 'The Family of Love', 254-9.

<sup>64</sup> J. J. Woltjer, 'De Vrede-makers', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis LXXXIX* (1976), 299-321.

somewhat reproachfully said of Ortelius: '(he) extolled safe tranquillity, I blessed and useful toil.'<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Quoted by H. Bongers, *De motivering van de godsdienstvrijheid bij Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert* (Arnhem, 1954), p. 128: 'Hy prees die veylighe rust, ick die salige ende nutte moeyten.'

## 4. Arminianism and English Culture\*

N. TYACKE

THE notion dies hard that Arminianism in early seventeenth century England was 'a catch-all term of abuse' expressing 'rather vague fears of a group of theologians who, by their emphasis upon the sacraments, ceremonial, and the *iure divino* status of bishops, seemed to be taking the Church back towards Rome'.<sup>1</sup> For such is the combined voice of Professor Kenyon, in his new Pelican history of Stuart England, and of Dr. Foster the modern biographer of Richard Neile, ultimately Archbishop of York and reputedly a great patron of English Arminian clergy. Yet there exists abundant evidence to show that it was precisely the anti-determinist views of the Dutch Arminius which Englishmen had in mind when they complained, with increasing vehemence, about the emergence of home-grown Arminianism. A good example of this usage is William Prynne's book *The Church of England's Old Antithesis to New Arminianisme*, first published in 1629, which seeks to vindicate the orthodoxy of the English Church from those who intrude 'the Arminian doctrines of free will, the resistability of grace, conditionall, yea mutable election, with total and final apostacie from the state of grace'. According to Prynne, a common lawyer, the very title deeds of 'our salvation' were at stake.<sup>2</sup> More-

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<sup>1</sup> J. P. Kenyon, *Stuart England* (London, 1978), p. 100; A. Foster, 'The Function of a Bishop: the Career of Richard Neile, 1562-1640', in *Continuity and Change* (ed. R. O'Day and F. Heal, Leicester, 1976), p. 54. Cf. N. Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in *The Origins of the English Civil War* (ed. C. Russell, London, 1973) pp. 119-43.

<sup>2</sup> William Prynne, *The Church of England's Old Antithesis to New Arminianisme* (London, 1629), sigs. a4v, c3v. It is perverse of Professor New to claim that the 'true'

over, as we shall see, those Englishmen labelled Arminian by their compatriots did usually espouse the cause of man's free will.

The religious questions raised by Arminius, Divinity Professor at Leiden, and by his Dutch followers were not of course new to Christianity in the early seventeenth century, but their teaching and even more their published writings launched a debate which threatened to tear Calvinist Europe apart. In England, where a previous challenge to Calvinist determinism had failed,<sup>3</sup> Dutch Arminian developments were followed with close attention. An important early link was Richard or 'Dutch' Thomson, as he is sometimes called, Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, who had known Arminius personally in Holland during the 1590s, a decade when Thomson and those like-minded had tried unsuccessfully to break the virtual monopoly of Calvinism within the English Church. In 1605 Thomson can be found writing of students newly arrived in Cambridge, from Leiden, being cross-questioned about the latest utterances of Arminius.<sup>4</sup> It was Thomson also who in 1611 lent Isaac Casaubon, now settled in England, a copy of the notorious Arminian book by Peter Bertius – *De Sanctorum Perseverantia et Apostasia*, of which King James wrote that 'the title... were enough to make it worthy the fire'.<sup>5</sup> Bertius was among the closest to Arminius of his Leiden disciples and with the posthumous printing, in 1612, of Arminius' own *Examen* of a book on predestination by William Perkins, late Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, it became public knowledge that Arminius had done literary battle with one of the most popular theologians in Jacobean England.<sup>6</sup> The following year, 1613, saw Hugo Grotius, the newly appointed Pensionary of Rotterdam, at the English Court propagandising in person on behalf of the Dutch Arminian or Remonstrant party.

Ostensibly on a trade mission to England, Grotius had been instructed by Oldenbarnevelt, Advocate of Holland, to canvass support for his policy of tolerating the Dutch Remonstrants. 'Dutch'

concern of this book is with ceremonies and not Arminian teachings about predestination, given that Prynne spends less than a page on the former compared with well over a hundred pages on the latter. J. F. H. New, *Anglican and Puritan* (London, 1964), p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 344-90. It is also the case that there were Dutch forerunners of Arminius, such as Gellius Sneecanus. Anti-Calvinism in both countries was partly a response to growing Calvinist extremism.

<sup>4</sup> Dominic Baudius, *Epistolarum Centuriae Tres* (Leiden, 1620), p. 731.

<sup>5</sup> *Isaaci Casauboni Epistolae* (Rotterdam, 1709), pp. 432-3; *His Majestie's Declaration... in the Cause of D. Conradus Vorstius* (London, 1612), p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> The index of popularity is provided by the number of editions of Perkins' various works compared with other English theological writers.

Thomson had recently died but Grotius was introduced by Casaubon to the two senior English clerics potentially most sympathetic to Arminianism – John Overall, Dean of St. Paul's, and Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Ely. They in turn helped to procure a private audience with the King. Grotius apparently found James in an eirenic frame of mind, very different from that in which two years earlier he had denounced Arminius as an 'enemie of God'. While the mood of the King was not to last, in Overall Grotius acquired henceforward a particularly warm supporter and collaborator. Overall, for instance, supplied Grotius with a copy of Thomson's tract *De Amissione et Intercisione Gratiae* that had languished in manuscript since the late 1590s. This work by Thomson, which like the *De Sanctorum* of Bertius argued that even the elect could fall from grace, was printed at Leiden in 1616.<sup>7</sup> Thomson was to be answered two years later by Robert Abbot, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford and brother of Archbishop George Abbot of Canterbury, 'burning', as his official biographer put it, 'with zeale both to defend the doctrine of truth and unity in the Reformed Churches'.<sup>8</sup>

Other potential English supporters of the Dutch Remonstrants at the time of Grotius' mission in 1613 were John Richardson, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and Samuel Brooke, Divinity Professor at Gresham College in London. Both men were to make plain their Arminian views on free will during the years 1616-17, and Richardson was as a consequence to lose his professorial chair.<sup>9</sup> At Oxford William Laud, the future archbishop, is the first person known to have maintained recognizably Arminian doctrines in the presence of a university auditory. Laud, in the words of his chaplain and biographer, Peter Heylyn, preaching on Shrove Sunday 1615 'insisted on some points which might indifferently be imputed either to Popery or Arminianism, as about that time they began to call it.' It emerges from Heylyn's account that these Arminian 'points' concerned 'free will, justification, concupiscence being a sin after baptism, inherent righteousness and certainty of salvation', and that Laud was indeed contending against 'the Calvinian rigours in the matter

<sup>7</sup> *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius* (ed. P. C. Molhuysen and B. L. Meulenbroek, 10 vol., The Hague, 1928-76), Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie, 64, I, 230-6, 244; *His Majestie's Declaration*, p. 18; *R. Thomsonis Angli Diatriba de Amissione et Intercisione Gratiae et Justificationis* (Leiden, 1616).

<sup>8</sup> Robert Abbot, *De Gratia et Perseverantia Sanctorum... quibus accessit Eiusdem in Richardi Thomsoni Anglo-Belgici Diatribam... Animadversio Brevis* (London, 1618), pp. 83-221. The preface (sig. c4v) provides the evidence for dating Thomson's manuscript to the late 1590s; Thomas Fuller, *Abel Redevivus* (London, 1651), p. 557.

<sup>9</sup> *The whole Works of... James Ussher* (ed. C. R. Elrington, 17 vol., Dublin, 1847-64), XV, 130; Cambridge University Library, MS Ff/5/25, fos. 94-112.

of predestination'. This is a very important testimony by a near Oxford contemporary, who was in addition to become an expert on the Arminian controversy, because it has been claimed that the views of Laud apropos free will are 'remarkably obscure'.<sup>10</sup> Laud in fact belonged to an Oxford group which had access to some of Arminius' own writings by 1613 and probably earlier, at a time when, as Heylyn says, the Calvinist predestinarians 'carried all before them'. In so far as Laud had reservations about the teachings of the Dutch Arminians he thought that they were too dogmatic. 'Something about these controversies is unmasterable in this life' was to be his private comment fifteen years later.<sup>11</sup> Another member with Laud of this same Oxford group was Thomas Jackson, Fellow of Corpus Christi College. We possess the text of a college sermon preached by Jackson in about 1611, where he attacks 'the fierce current of modern opinions, which deny all possibility of running (in any sort) to God's mercy before grace infused do draw us. The unseasonable overflow of which newly outburst doctrine throughout our land doth more mischief to men's souls than the summer floods do to their fields'. Significantly he also says that his teaching runs the risk of being branded as 'Pelagianism... should I utter this doctrine in some public audience'.<sup>12</sup>

Just as the Dutch Remonstrants sought English support so did the Counter-Remonstrants. This involved, among other things, a foray into recent history and saw the publication in 1613 of a two volume collection of documents deriving from the Cambridge predestinarian disputes of the 1590s. The volumes were edited by Anthony Thysius, Divinity Professor at Harderwijk, who also provided prefatory histories written from a Calvinist point of view. Many of these documents had never been printed before, although Thysius' source remains mysterious.<sup>13</sup> The first volume begins with the *Summa Trium de Praedestinatione* of Peter Baro, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge until driven out by the Calvinists in 1596. According to Thysius the growing unorthodoxy of Baro had finally provoked his professorial colleague, William Whitaker, into taking a stand against

<sup>10</sup> Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus* (London, 1668), pp. 66-8 and *Historia Quinquaginta-Articularis: or a Declaration of the Judgement of the Western Churches, and more particularly of the Church of England, in the Five Controverted Points, reproched in these Last Times by the Name of Arminianism* (London, 1660); J. P. Kenyon, *Stuart England*, p. 99.

<sup>11</sup> Oxford University Archives, O. U. Hyp. B. 20, fos. 18r-v; *The Works of... William Laud* (ed. W. Scott and J. Bliss, 7 vol., Oxford, 1847-60), IV, 319, VI, 292.

<sup>12</sup> Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS. D. 47, fos. 55r-v; *The Works of Thomas Jackson* (12 vol., Oxford, 1844), VIII, 256, IX, 441, 444.

<sup>13</sup> Thysius' source may have been Laurence Chaderton, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. P. Lake, 'Matthew Hutton - a Puritan Bishop?', *History*, LXIV (1979), 202.

him. Thus in February 1595 Whitaker delivered his lecture 'adversus universalis gratiae assertores', in the presence of a Cambridge audience which included three earls, five barons and many gentry. This lecture was published by Thysius with the *Summa Trium*, in which Baro like Arminius rejects absolute predestination, both the supralapsarian and sublapsarian varieties, arguing instead that election and reprobation are conditional on the behaviour of the individual. There follow refutations of Baro by the continental theologians John Piscator and Francis Junius the elder. Also included in this volume are the Lambeth Articles of 1595, so named because they had received their final form from Archbishop Whitgift at Lambeth Palace in his adjudication of the Cambridge disputes. Whitgift had sided with the Calvinists as had his fellow archbishop – Hutton of York, and Thysius' second volume contains a piece by Hutton defending the Calvinist case. These two books were clearly intended as ammunition for the Counter-Remonstrant party, but Thysius also expressed the hope in an unpublished letter of August 1613 that 'si placet quod ago etiam Ecclesiam Anglicanam ad initia Reformationis revocabo'.<sup>14</sup> He would seem to imply that anti-Calvinists were again making progress within the English Church.

Apart from Thomson's tract *De Amissione* no English propaganda comparable to the Thysius volumes was produced by the Dutch Remonstrants. With the prospect, however, of a national synod to decide the fate of Dutch Arminianism efforts were made by the Remonstrants, and their supporters, to influence the choice of the proposed foreign delegations. Oldenbarnevelt wrote in June 1618 to Noel de Caron, Dutch Ambassador in London, suggesting three English bishops as delegates. The name of John Overall, now Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, causes no surprise but that the other two members of this episcopal trio, suggested by Oldenbarnevelt, should be Richard Neile of Durham and John Buckeridge of Rochester is a remarkable tribute to their early Arminian reputations. As it happened none of them attended the national synod at Dordrecht, King James sending instead a group of English Calvinists who participated there in the condemnation of Arminianism. Nevertheless the confidence of Oldenbarnevelt and his advisers in the Arminian sympathies of Neile and Buckeridge is borne out by their later defence, with their protégé Laud, of the English Arminian Richard Montagu, whose writings were to be described by Grotius in 1626 as demonstrating

<sup>14</sup> *Petri Baronis Summa Trium de Praedestinatione Sententiarum...* (Harderwijk, 1613) and *Brevis et Dilucida Explicatio... de Electione, Praedestinatione ac Reprobatione, Autore Mathaeo, Eboracensis Archiepiscopo...* (Harderwijk, 1613), sig. A4, pp. 1-44; British Library, Additional MS. 22, 961, fo. 185.

that the doctrines of the English Church and the Synod of Dordrecht differed radically.<sup>15</sup>

The fortunes of the Dutch Remonstrants were inextricably bound up with those of Oldenbarnevelt, and his own fall gave rise in England to a considerable popular literature, mostly translations from the Dutch. In one such work of 1618, entitled *Barnevel's Apology*, the term Arminian or Arminians occurs over thirty times; 'Arminianisme' is also used. *Barnevel's Apology* singles out predestination as a key issue and Oldenbarnevelt's view of this doctrine is labelled Arminian, the author concluding with a predestinarian prayer directed against the 'Arminian wicked sect'. A further manifestation of newly aroused lay interest is the London performance, in August 1619, of a play by Fletcher and Massinger called *The Tragedy of Sir John van Olden Barnaveelt*. The play draws on the earlier pamphlet literature, and the term Arminian or Arminians is frequently used in the text. The year 1619 also saw the English publication of *The Judgement of the Synode holden at Dort, concerning the Five Articles* of 'predestination and the points thereto annexed.' A preface explains the background to the Synod, the Dutch Church having been 'assaulted by one James Harmans, alias Arminius, and his followers, assuming the title of Remonstrants'. This edition of the canons of Dordrecht was produced by the royal printer John Bill. The Oxford press in 1623 and 1624 produced further English language editions of the Dordrecht canons, as confirmed by 'the nationall synode of the Reformed Churches of France' and in the format of a thirty-four page pamphlet. Meanwhile for the cognoscenti there were the Latin anti-Arminian lectures of Robert Abbot, published in 1618, and the similar effusions of his successor as Regius Professor at Oxford, John Prideaux. At the Oxford Acts between 1616 and 1622 Prideaux lectured against the Arminians concerning reprobation, universal grace, conversion, justification, perseverance and the certainty of salvation. At Cambridge the equivalent anti-Arminian role was played by Samuel Ward, who had been an English delegate at Dordrecht and was now Lady Margaret Professor.<sup>16</sup> Arminianism therefore was to some extent a familiar

<sup>15</sup> *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt bescheiden betreffende zijn staatkundig beleid en zijn Familie* (ed. S. P. Haak and A. J. Veenendaal, 3 vol., The Hague, 1934-67), Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie, 121, III, 440. My reading of this document differs from the editor; *The Works of... William Laud*, VI, 249; *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, III, 8-9.

<sup>16</sup> *Barnevel's Apology: or Holland Myserie* (London, 1618); *The Tragedy of Sir John van Olden Barnaveelt* (ed. W. P. Frijlinck, Amsterdam, 1922); *The Judgement of the Synode holden at Dort...* (London, 1619), sig. B3; *Articles Agreed on in the National Synode of the Reformed Churches of France* (Oxford, 1623); Robert Abbot, *De Gratia*, pp. 1-82; John Prideaux, *Lectiones Novem* (Oxford, 1625), pp. 1-22, 49-170; Samuel Ward, *Opera Nonnulla* (London, 1658), pp. 127-30.

topic when first raised in the House of Commons during May 1624.

The Commons became involved because of a complaint against Richard Montagu's book *A New Gagg for an Old Goose*. This complaint took the form of a petition which runs in part as follows.

It is apparent unto the world how the erroneous and dangerous opinions of Arminius and his sectaries have infested and had brought into great perill the states of the United Provinces, if the King's Majesty by his gracious care, power, piety and providence, had not helped to quench that fire. Notwithstanding, this dangerous doctrine, and other erroneous opinions, hath of late been hatched, and now begins to be more boldly maintained by some divines of this our kingdom, especially by one Mr. Richard Montagu...

Reporting the petition from committee, John Pym described Montagu's book as 'full fraught with dangerous opinions of Arminius quite contrary to the articles established [i.e. the Thirty-nine Articles] *in five several points*.' This is almost certainly an allusion to the 'five articles' condemned at Dordrecht, and the parliamentary definition of Arminianism remained equally precise throughout the 1620s. Thus in February 1629 the Commons illustrated 'the doctrine of the Church of England in those points wherein the Arminians differ from us' by 'the resolution of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other reverend bishops and divines assembled at Lambeth for this very purpose, to declare their opinions concerning these points, *anno* 1595, unto which the Archbishop of York did likewise agree', and 'the suffrage of the British divines sent by our late sovereign King James to the Synod of Dort'.<sup>17</sup> To the extent that Popery was seen as synonymous with Arminianism this was because the teachings on predestination by the Council of Trent were so similar.<sup>18</sup>

At the time of writing *A New Gagg* in 1623 Montagu had not read Arminius as such. Nevertheless he soon repaired this omission, commenting of Arminius in May 1625 that 'the man had more in him than all the Netherlands'. Montagu arrived at his views partly as a result of studying the Greek Fathers of the early Christian Church, but he had also moved in anti-Calvinist circles at Cambridge. For example in the preface to his first book, published in 1610, he thanks 'Dutch' Thomson for providing scholarly assistance. His other most notable link with Dutch Arminianism was John Cosin, former secretary and librarian to Bishop Overall. It was Cosin to whom Montagu sent the

<sup>17</sup> John Yates, *Ibis ad Caesarem* (London, 1626), pt. iii, 46; *Journals of the House of Commons, 1547-1714* (17 vol., 1742), *Commons Journal*, I, 788; *Commons Debates for 1629* (ed. W. Notestein and F. H. Relf, Minneapolis, 1921), p. 99.

<sup>18</sup> *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (trans. T. A. Buckley, London, 1851), pp. 30-46.

manuscript of *A New Gagg* and who in turn supplied him with the works of Arminius. Cosin was now chaplain to Bishop Neile, Overall having died in 1619. Neile emerged as one of the staunchest defenders of Montagu, becoming in effect his patron as he was already of the Oxford Arminian Thomas Jackson. The relations however of Neile with Dutch Arminianism seem to have been less direct than were those of Andrewes and Laud. Grotius, who had kept in touch with Andrewes since his own mission to England in 1613, apparently first made contact with Laud via the Dutch Remonstrant exile Francis Junius the younger. Laud had recommended Junius for the post of librarian to the Earl of Arundel and Junius reciprocated in 1622 with a copy of Grotius' *Disquisitio* on the difference between an ancient Pelagian and a modern Arminian. Junius similarly supplied a copy of the *Disquisitio* to Samuel Harsnett, Bishop of Norwich, who like Andrewes was an anti-Calvinist survivor from Elizabethan days. Grotius also corresponded with Christopher Wren, chaplain to Andrewes, and with Cosin, who as we have noted furnished Montagu with Arminius.<sup>19</sup>

The death of King James in March 1625 found Montagu about to publish a further book in his own defence – *Apello Caesarem*. Within a fortnight after the start of the new reign Laud was sent by the Duke of Buckingham, his patron and the royal favourite, to inquire of Andrewes 'what he would have done in the cause of the Church... especially in the matter of the Five Articles', that is to say Arminianism. That July, again in the words of Laud, 'it pleased His Majesty King Charles to intimate to the House of Commons that what had been there said and resolved, without consulting him, in Montague's cause, was not pleasing to him'. The following month, at the start of the second session of the 1625 parliament, Laud, Buckeridge and John Howson, Bishop of Oxford, addressed a long letter to Buckingham on behalf of Montagu. In the course of this letter they disassociate the English Church from the 'fatal opinions' enshrined in the Lambeth Articles and more recently promulgated by the Synod of Dordrecht. Interestingly they also stress 'how little' such doctrines agree 'with the practice and obedience to all government'.<sup>20</sup>

These preliminary moves culminated in January 1626 with a royal

<sup>19</sup> *The Correspondence of John Cosin* (ed. G. Ornsby for the Surtees Society, LII, LV, London, 1869-72), I, 33, 68, 77-9, 90; *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni in Iulianum Inactivae Duae* (ed. Richard Montagu, Eton, 1610), 'Ad Lectorem'; *The Works of Thomas Jackson*, IV, 303-4; Francis Junius, *De Pictura Veterum* (Amsterdam, 1637), sig.\* 2v; *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* (10 vol., Leiden, 1911-37), IX, 483; *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, II, 24-6, 99-101, 241, 246-7.

<sup>20</sup> *The Works of... William Laud*, III, 160, 167, VI, 244-6.

instruction to Andrewes that he consult with Bishops Montaigne, Neile, Buckridge, Howson and Laud, 'or some of them', concerning 'Mr. Montague's late book, and deliver their opinions touching the same for the preservation of the truth and the peace of the Church of England'. Predictably, since all these bishops were Arminian sympathisers, they reported that Montagu 'hath not affirmed anything to be the doctrine of the Church of England but that which in our opinion is the doctrine of the Church of England or agreeable thereunto'. They went on to recommend a prohibition of 'any further controverting of these questions'. News of their meeting soon leaked out, the Earl of Clare writing in February that this

'commission by the episcopall decemvirs, regulating doctrine and faith, will reinforce the storm, for this creates the King not only (as heertofore) supreme head of the forme, that is of ecclesiastical discipline, but of the matter, even in all tenets of faith.'

Clare went on to say that 'had reformation of error been the object' Arminianism ought to have been referred to 'a generall free councell of all the bishops and other divynes'. The upshot was that King Charles embodied the recommendations of this 'committee of a few selected bishops', as Clare called them, in his proclamation of June 1626 for 'the establishing of the peace and quiet of the Church of England'.<sup>21</sup>

English royal policy, with regard to Arminianism, was much closer than is usually recognized to that which Oldenbarnevelt had earlier sought to implement in the United Provinces. Charles was concerned to protect Montagu and other Arminians, like Jackson, both from the wrath of the laity in Parliament *and* from their fellow clergy in Convocation. It is important to recall here that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York at this time, George Abbot and Toby Matthew, were Calvinists. In 1629 the Calvinist Bishop Davenant, who had been an English delegate at Dordrecht, was still convinced that a free vote in Convocation would result in the condemnation of Arminianism. Although Charles refused to allow any such vote, a member of the Lower House of Convocation in 1625 recalled later that 'five and forty of us', led by Daniel Featley, chaplain to Archbishop Abbot, there 'made a solemn covenant among our selves to oppose every thing that did but savour or scent never so little of Pelagianisme or Semi-Pelagianisme'. This is an excellent illustration of the inappropriateness of the term 'High Church' as used by

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 178-9, VI, 249; Nottingham University Library, MS. Ne. C. 15, 405, p. 180. The proclamation is printed in J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 154-5.

modern historians to describe the English Arminian movement. For in so far as the heresy hunting Lower House of Convocation under William and Mary, and Anne, had an early seventeenth-century equivalent it was Featley and his Calvinist band of covenanters rather than bishops like Laud and Neile. Indeed Charles' proclamation of June 1626 is comparable to the resolution of the States of Holland in January 1614 which, as Jan den Tex has written, was feared as a device for tolerating Arminianism while banning orthodox predestinarian teaching.<sup>22</sup> Unlike the Dutch resolution, the English proclamation did not list specific forbidden doctrines but simply prohibited 'any new inventions or opinions' which differed 'from the sound and orthodox grounds of the true religion sincerely professed and happily established in the Church of England.'

If we would understand the Calvinist mentality, lay as well as clerical, which Arminianism so much offended, then William Prynne's first book, *The Perpetuitie of a Regenerate Man's Estate*, offers us a guide. It was published in 1626 as one of the many replies to Montagu, all in English and all defining Arminianism in terms of the teachings condemned by the Synod of Dordrecht.<sup>23</sup> After arguing at length 'that such as are once truly regenerated and ingrafted into Christ by a lively faith can neither finally nor totally fall from grace', Prynne turns to the 'use' or application of this doctrine. The 'estate of grace', he points out, is the one true and permanent 'treasure', whereas 'friends, goods, riches, honours... have their periods and their ends'. When troubles and ultimately death come grace still abides, and 'all the waters of adversitie' cannot extinguish it. Opponents of this doctrine are 'a company of carnall, gracelesse, prophane and dissolute persons'. As for Thomson's book on the subject, the author was 'a Dutchman and a drunken one too', who in his life was 'loose, licentious and voluptuous'. Arminians, Prynne says, are libertines morally as well as intellectually, for 'their very lives and actions do prove their doctrine'. From 1626 to 1629 Prynne wrote three books against Arminianism. He also attacked drink and fashion in *Healthes*:

<sup>22</sup> Bodleian Library, Tanner MS. 72, fo. 310; W. Loe, *A Sermon Preached at... the Funerall of... Daniel Featley* (London, 1645), p. 25; G. Every, *The High Church Party, 1688-1714* (London, 1956); Hugo Grotius, *Operum Theologicorum* (3 vol., London, 1679), III, 141; J. den Tex, *Oldenbarnevelt* (2 vol., Cambridge, 1973), II, 552.

<sup>23</sup> Henry Burton, *A Plea to an Appeale* (London, 1626); George Carleton, *An Examination of those things wherein the Author of the Late Appeale holdeth the Doctrines of the Pelagians and the Arminians to be the Doctrines of the Church of England* (London, 1626); Daniel Featley, *A Second Parallel... against the Appealer* (London, 1626); Anthony Wotton, *A Dangerous Plot Discovered... wherein is proved that Mr. Richard Montague... laboureth to bring in the Faith of Rome and Arminius* (London, 1626); John Yates, *Ibis ad Ceasarem* (London, 1626).

*Sickness* and *The Unloveliness of Lovelockes*, both published in 1628. His other target at this time was a devotional work compiled by the Arminian John Cosin, a book imbued with the sacramentalism that was to emerge as an adjunct of English Arminianism in the 1630s.<sup>24</sup>

During June 1628 Laud and Neile were named by the Commons as suspected 'Arminians', and at the end of the year Charles issued his declaration against 'unnecessary disputations, altercations or questions', which to this day still prefaces the Thirty-nine Articles. As supreme governor of the English Church, Charles laid down that

in these both curious and unhappy differences, which have for so many hundred years, in different times and places, exercised the Church of Christ, we will, that all further curious search be laid aside, and these disputes shut up in God's promises, as they be generally set forth to us in the holy scriptures...

What this meant can be seen from some of the writings of the Arminian Thomas Jackson, published in the ensuing decade. Christ, says Jackson, died not only for the elect but for 'all mankind', both 'efficiently' and 'sufficiently' without limitation. Similarly, in a sermon preached before King Charles, he castigates the view that God has 'destinated' anyone to 'inevitable destruction before he gave them life or preservation'. On the other, Calvinist side, as the 'root and branch' petitioners complained in 1640, clergy were inhibited from teaching the 'truth of God' concerning 'the doctrine of predestination, of free grace, of perseverance [and] of original sin remaining after baptism', or 'against universal grace, election for faith foreseen [and] free will'. They contrasted this with the 'swarming of lascivious, idle and unprofitable books and pamphlets, playbooks and ballads'.<sup>25</sup>

Although many of the other religious changes of the 1630s were related to the temporary triumph of Arminianism critics still tended to distinguish. Thus the new ceremonial emphasis on the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, as sources of divine grace in lieu of absolute predestination, was usually dubbed 'superstitious' or 'popish' rather than Arminian.<sup>26</sup> Even the description of the religious community established at Little Gidding, in Huntingdonshire, as an

<sup>24</sup> William Prynne, *The Perpetuities of a Regenerate Man's Estate* (London, 1626), pp. 222-5, 405-8, *God no Imposter nor Deluder* (London, 1629), *The Church of England's Old Antithesis to New Arminianisme* (London, 1629), and *A Briefe Survey and Censure of Mr. Cozens his Couzening Devotions* (London, 1628).

<sup>25</sup> John Rushworth, *Historical Collections* (7 vol., London, 1659-1710), I, 621; *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution* (ed. S. R. Gardiner, Oxford, 1962), pp. 76, 138-9; *The Works of Thomas Jackson*, VI, 109, VIII, 217-19.

<sup>26</sup> *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 139, 229-30.

'Arminian Nunnery' turns out to be accurate with regard to its Arminianism. Nicholas Ferrar, leader of the community, had been exposed to Arminian influences at Clare College, Cambridge. He in turn recommended the works of the Arminian Jackson to a pupil, Barnabas Oley, who later edited them.<sup>27</sup> The *iure divino* theory of episcopacy had little to do with the matter, save only that the bench of bishops came increasingly to be composed of Arminians and was therefore discredited by association. Few eyebrows had been raised earlier when Bishop Carleton, at the Synod of Dordrecht, defended the divine institution of bishops as retained in the English Church.<sup>28</sup> The most impressive witness, however, to the religious centrality of Arminianism in early seventeenth-century England is the Westminster Confession of Faith itself. This summation of English Calvinism produced by the religious arm of the Long Parliament, harks back via the Synod of Dordrecht to the Lambeth Articles and beyond. It was also to prove one of the most enduring monuments of the Puritan Revolution.<sup>29</sup>

## II

Something of the wider philosophical implications of the Arminian controversy is evident from the strong denial by Gerhard Vossius in 1614 that the Remonstrants were sowing the seeds of religious uncertainty. The allegation arose in the context of a book by Matthew Slade, attacking the religious policies of the States of Holland and their apologist Grotius. At this time Vossius and Slade, an Englishman, were Rectors respectively of the Dordrecht and Amsterdam Gymnasiums. Vossius, discussing Slade's book, distinguishes between permanent suspension of judgement – 'scepticam ac Pyrrhonianam', and doubt as a means of arriving at truth. The Remonstrants, however, remained vulnerable to the charge of scepticism on account of their declared wish to exclude predestination from the category of a fundamental of faith.<sup>30</sup> This was to reopen the debate of Erasmus

<sup>27</sup> *The Arminian Nunnery: or a Description of the Late Erected Monasticall Place, called the Arminian Nunnery, at Little Gidding in Huntingtonshire* (London, 1641). Ferrar's tutor was the Arminian Augustine Lindsell, colleague of 'Dutch' Thomson; *The Works of Thomas Jackson*, I, xxviii-xxix.

<sup>28</sup> Walter Balcanqual, *A Joynt Attestation, avowing that the Discipline of the Church of England was not impeached by the Synode of Dort* (London, 1626).

<sup>29</sup> G. S. Hendry, *The Westminster Confession for Today* (London, 1960).

<sup>30</sup> *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius*, I, 353; Matthew Slade, *Disceptationis cum Conrado Vorstio... Pars Altera* (Amsterdam, 1614); Hugo Grotius, *Operum Theologicorum*, III, 111-12.

with Luther and of Castellio with Calvin. It also supports the contention that Arminianism was part of the seventeenth-century Pyrrhonian crisis, as to whether truth can be known and, if so, in what measure. Indeed the Calvinist doctrine of assurance poses the problem of certainty in a particularly acute form, because the true Christian is not only predestinated but must try to convince himself of that fact.<sup>31</sup> The principal source of philosophical scepticism was the Hellenistic writer Sextus Empiricus. Casaubon had made use of his works, in Greek manuscript, when providing notes to the 1593 edition of the *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius. The following year, 1594, 'Dutch' Thomson had written to Casaubon asking to borrow the Greek text of Sextus.<sup>32</sup> To what extent Casaubon and Thomson married up their philosophical interests with their theology remains, however, unclear.

The sceptical attack had soon extended from religious dogmatism to include the whole realm of natural knowledge as well. In England the famous phrase of John Donne about the new philosophy calling 'all in doubt' exemplifies the sceptical response to the astronomical discoveries of Galileo, especially as announced in his *Siderius Nuncius* of 1610.<sup>33</sup> Despite the English interest generated by Galileo greater local excitement was aroused by the comet of 1618. This too inspired a poet, Richard Corbett, who that December addressed a verse letter from Oxford to Thomas Aylesbury at Sion House in London. At this date Corbett, later Bishop of Oxford, was a student of Christ Church and Aylesbury was secretary to Buckingham, as Lord Admiral. What, asks Corbett, is the astronomical significance of this new star in the sky, and is it compatible with Aristotelian cosmology:

Say, shall the old philosophy be true?

Everyone is discussing the comet, and he appeals to the Sion House experts to resolve the controversy:

By thy rich studyes, and deep Harriot's minde.

<sup>31</sup> H. R. Trevor-Roper, *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change* (London, 1967), pp. 193-236 and Edward Hyde, *Earl of Clarendon* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 5-8; R. H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (New York, 1968), pp. 1-16.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-43; M. Pattison, *Isaac Casaubon, 1559-1614* (London, 1875), pp. 33-4.

<sup>33</sup> John Donne, *The Epithalamions, Anniversaries and Epicedes* (ed. W. Milgate, Oxford, 1978), pp. 27-8, 140-5. Donne's scepticism is even more pronounced in his 'Second Anniversarie', *op. cit.*, pp. 48-9, 165-6.

Thomas Harriot was the nearest equivalent in England to Galileo, and this response by Corbett to the challenge of new celestial phenomena is markedly different from the stance of Donne earlier. Corbett was certainly an Arminian sympathiser as can be seen from his poem *The Distracted Puritane*, in the course of which he mocks the predestinarian schema of William Perkins.<sup>34</sup> While the religion or irreligion of Harriot and his circle remains a controversial subject Harriot's own interest in Arminianism appears to have gone unremarked. We can document this interest from an extant list of book purchases made by him in 1618. Out of a total of 44 items 5 relate to Arminianism, either for or against, and they include the *De Sanctorum* of Bertius.<sup>35</sup> Among the Harriot papers there also survives part of John Overall's analysis of the differences between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants, as well as some notes by Harriot on Pyrrho and 'his followers called Scepticks which will not affirme or deny any knowledge to be true or false but do still doubt, yet they make there knowledge certayne to doubt assuredly'. Therefore, Harriot argues, 'somethinge' at least is certain even on Pyrrhonian grounds. His own theory of nature was atomistic and it is tempting to see Harriot as having anticipated Pierre Gassendi, the French *libertin érudit*, who combined atomism and free will within a framework of constructive or mitigated scepticism.<sup>36</sup>

Harriot's benefactor was the atomist Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland, who emerged in the 1620s as a friend and supporter of the Arminian Montagu. Among the later generation of English atomists, at least as regards the propagandists, Arminianism seems to have been the prevalent mode of religious thought. Their chief patron the Earl of Newcastle was the only peer, apart from the infant Buckingham, to be remembered in Archbishop Laud's will, and the atomists Walter Charleton and John Evelyn were each enthusiastic free willers. Charleton, a medical doctor, defended atomism in 1652 while refuting 'the doctrine of Calvin concerning absolute predestination', which he brackets with the 'fate of the Stoicks'.<sup>37</sup> Similarly Evelyn, a

<sup>34</sup> *The Poems of Richard Corbett* (ed. J. A. W. Bennett and H. R. Trevor-Roper, Oxford, 1955), pp. 58, 63-5.

<sup>35</sup> The list is reproduced in *Thomas Harriot: Renaissance Scientist* (ed. J. W. Shirley, Oxford, 1974), pp. 102-3. For a discussion of Harriot's religion see J. Jacquot, 'Thomas Harriot's Reputation for Impiety', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society*, IX (1952), 164-187.

<sup>36</sup> British Library, Additional MS. 6789, fos. 460, 464; R. H. Kargon, *Atomism in England from Harriot to Newton* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 24-7; J. S. Spink, *French Free-Thought from Gassendi to Voltaire* (London, 1960), pp. 14-17, 85-102.

<sup>37</sup> R. H. Kargon, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14, 63-92; *The Correspondence of John Cosin*, I, 68, 73; *The Works of... William Laud*, IV, 443; Walter Charleton, *The Darknes of Atheism*

member of the growing class of virtuosi, popularised atomism in his 1656 *Essay on Lucretius*, the follower of Epicurus, having already endorsed the extreme Arminianism of Jeremy Taylor – theologian and later bishop.<sup>38</sup> Evelyn also translated works by the *libertins érudits* François de la Mothe le Vayer and Gabriel Naudé.<sup>39</sup>

The link between atomism and anti-determinism is provided by Epicurus, as can be seen most clearly from the writings of Charleton during the 1650s.<sup>40</sup> Knowledge of Epicurean teaching derived from Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and the life of Epicurus, by Diogenes Laertius, which incorporates three of his letters and his maxims. Casaubon, as we have seen, had a hand in the 1593 edition of Diogenes. According to Epicurus, 'the whole of being consists of bodies and space'. The smallest constituent parts of bodies are atoms, which are indestructible and 'in continual motion through all eternity'. Man's 'own actions are free, and it is to them that praise and blame naturally attach'.<sup>41</sup> Lucretius explains the compatibility of physical causation with free will by the concept of atomic swerve, which introduces an element of indeterminacy.<sup>42</sup> While in England the new mechanical philosophy of atomism was popularized by Arminians, it has also been argued that there exists an affinity between the mitigated scepticism of theologians like William Chillingworth, Laud's godson, and the scientific attitude of the Royal Society. Chillingworth's book *The Religion of Protestants*, published in 1638, explicitly draws on the idea of Grotius that there are different levels of

(London, 1652), pp. 43-7, 215. Throughout this book Charleton is concerned to purge the atheistic element from Epicurus' teaching.

<sup>38</sup> *An Essay on the First Book of T. Lucretius Carus... interpreted and made English Verse* (London, 1656); *The Whole Works of... Jeremy Taylor* (ed. C. P. Eden, 10 vol., London, 1850-56), I, xli-ii.

<sup>39</sup> François de la Mothe le Vayer, *Of Liberty and Servitude* (London, 1649) and Gabriel Naudé, *Instructions concerning the Erecting of a Library* (London, 1661); Popkin, *The History of Scepticism*, p. 91.

<sup>40</sup> As well as *The Darknes of Atheism* Charleton wrote *Physiologia Epicuro-Gasendo-Charltoniana* (London, 1654) and *Epicurus' Morals* (London, 1656). Together these works purvey a form of Christian Epicureanism. Here it is perhaps suggestive that in 1598 Thomas James, when dedicating his translation of du Vair's *La Philosophie Morale des Stoïques* to Lord Mountjoy, replied to those who denigrated Stoics as 'stockes' by calling them 'wisards'. Much depends, however, on the date when the term 'wizard' was first used to describe members of the Northumberland group. Guillaume du Vair, *The Moral Philosophy of the Stoicks* (ed. R. Kirk, New Brunswick, 1951), p. 45.

<sup>41</sup> Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (trans. R. D. Hicks, 2 vol., London, 1950), II, 569, 573, 659.

<sup>42</sup> Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* (trans. W. H. D. Rouse, London, 1924), pp. 101-5. I have found particularly helpful here A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics* (London, 1974), pp. 56-61. On the other hand atomism as formulated by Democritus, a precursor of Epicurus, abolishes free will.

human certainty, in natural science as well as religion, and all less than absolute. Chillingworth himself rejected Calvinist determinism and was suspected of Socinianism.<sup>43</sup>

Atomism and Arminianism also seem to have coalesced in the case of William Boswell, successively secretary to Lord Herbert of Cheshire and Bishop Williams and then a clerk of the Privy Council. While in the employ of Lord Herbert, Boswell appears to have had a hand in the production of Herbert's book *De Veritate*. Certainly the form in which the manuscript is dedicated to Boswell and George Herbert, the poet, implies a fairly intimate relationship. Friend Boswell and brother George are asked to read the work and expunge anything contrary to good morals or the true Catholic faith.<sup>44</sup> In his autobiography Lord Herbert recalls that he was particularly urged to publish *De Veritate* by Grotius and Daniel Tilenus, the leading French defender of Arminius' teachings. The book is conceived as an answer to the challenge of scepticism generally, and seeks to establish a method for arriving at truth. In the course of it Lord Herbert says that 'free will has been given us for our benefit that we may devote ourselves by our free choice to the means which lead to happiness'. He also warns against 'doctrines of predestination' which issue in 'a kind of Stoic fate'.<sup>45</sup> Boswell, Herbert's secretary, was among the most enthusiastic of English followers of Galileo. He both purchased the works of Galileo and wrote to him, his intermediaries including John Spelman, son of the antiquary Sir Henry. A virtuoso, Boswell was appointed in 1631 to catalogue the royal collection of coins and medals.<sup>46</sup> One of his favourite similes was to compare a situation with the *intermundia* of Epicurus – the spaces between worlds in an infinite universe.<sup>47</sup>

We do not know how far Boswell agreed with the views of Herbert as expressed in *De Veritate*. Furthermore it would be a mistake to underestimate the capacity of early seventeenth-century man to compartmentalize his thought. In this connexion there exists an instructive letter from Boswell, written in October 1625 to Samuel Collins,

<sup>43</sup> H. G. van Leeuwen, *The Problem of Certainty in English Thought, 1630-90* (The Hague, 1970), pp. 21-2 and *passim*; R. R. Orr, *Reason and Authority: the Thought of William Chillingworth* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 79-80, 97-9.

<sup>44</sup> British Library, Sloane MS. 3957, fo. 1. The dedication is dated 15 December 1622. For details of Boswell's career I have relied mainly on the revised biographical article by E. S. de Beer in *Corrections and Additions to the Dictionary of National Biography* (Boston, 1966), pp. 29-30.

<sup>45</sup> *The Life of Edward, First Lord Herbert of Cheshire* (ed. J. M. Shuttleworth, London, 1976), p. 120; Popkin, *The History of Scepticism*, pp. 155-65; *De Veritate* (trans. M. H. Carré, Bristol, 1937), pp. 137, 164.

<sup>46</sup> P.R.O. SP 16/141 fos. 139r-v, 143 and SP 16/183 fo. 1r-v.

<sup>47</sup> P.R.O. SP 84/146 fo. 128; King's College, Cambridge, Provosts' Letter Books, IV, no. 63. Boswell quotes Epicurus in the original Greek, from memory.

Provost of King's College, Cambridge, where Boswell refers to 'the old and trewe Pythagorean or Samian philosophie', now revived by Galileo, and goes on to distinguish between the 'metaphysician' and the 'natural philosopher', the latter being simply 'narrator naturae creatae'.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless it is significant that in 1632 Boswell was sent as English Resident to The Hague. On religious grounds this was a sensitive diplomatic post. For since the high Calvinist times of the Synod of Dordrecht Arminians had come to dominate the English Church, whereas in the United Provinces only a limited toleration had been extended to the Remonstrants. During the late 1620s two Arminian sympathisers were nominated to succeed the retiring English Ambassador Sir Dudley Carleton senior. The first in point of time was Sir Robert Killigrew, the one-time patron of 'Dutch' Thomson and friend of Casaubon. The other nominee was Richard Spencer, younger son of Baron Spencer and the Oxford pupil of the Arminian Thomas Jackson. Spencer, to whom Jackson had dedicated a tract on free will, defended Arminianism in the House of Commons in 1629. Although Killigrew and Spencer each received royal warrants for payment as 'ambassador resident' at The Hague neither took up the appointment.<sup>49</sup> Boswell's instructions as Resident make ritual obeisance to the dominant Counter-Remonstrant party but he was soon collaborating with Vossius, now Professor of History at the new Remonstrant Academy in Amsterdam.<sup>50</sup> After the outbreak of the English Civil War, Boswell remained as Royalist representative at The Hague. Before his death in 1650 he entrusted certain manuscripts to his friend Isaac Gruter, a schoolmaster and lawyer. These comprised the atomistic writings of William Gilbert and Francis Bacon, which Gruter arranged to have published in the early 1650s. Gruter also edited at this time some of the writings of Grotius, including a discussion with John Overall on the subject of predestination.<sup>51</sup>

The varied interests of virtuosi like Boswell, which so obviously transcend the modern boundary between the 'two cultures' of natural science and the humanities, were characteristic of the Court of Charles I. Lucy Hutchinson, a hostile commentator, acknowledges in the

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> P.R.O. SP 38/13 fo. 132 and SP 38/14 fo. 167v; *M. Val. Martialis Epigrammaton Libri* (ed. Thomas Farnaby, London, 1615), sig. A2; *Ephemerides Isaaci Casauboni* (ed. J. Russell, 2 vol., Oxford, 1850), II, 811-12; *The Works of Thomas Jackson*, IX, 504-8; *Commons Debates for 1629*, p. 117.

<sup>50</sup> P.R.O. SP 84/144 fos. 164v, 167v; R. P. Stearns, *Congregationalism in the Netherlands*, (Chicago, 1940), pp. 64-5.

<sup>51</sup> R. H. Kargon *op. cit.*, pp. 52-3; *Hugonis Grotii Quaedam Hactenus Inedita...* (Amsterdam, 1652), pp. 236-81.

biography of her husband that at the Caroline Court 'men of learning and ingenuity in all arts were in esteeme, and receiv'd encouragement from the King'. Charles was preeminently interested in painting, but 'all' of the arts included the mathematical sciences. Such inclusive royal patronage is symbolized for example in the painting by Gerrit van Honthorst of Buckingham presenting to Charles and Henrietta Maria the seven liberal arts, with Astronomy prominently featured. Charles was later to commission the mathematical practitioner Richard Delamain to construct a giant brass octant and various other scientific instruments.<sup>52</sup> Nor was this an exclusive court culture in the sense of being cut off from the rest of the country. During much of the year courtiers resided on their country estates and the circle around Viscount Falkland at Great Tew in Oxfordshire was only the most famous of similar groups throughout most of England. The households of Cavendish in Nottinghamshire, Hatton in Northamptonshire, Paston in Norfolk, Sandys in Kent, and many more, all played comparable roles.<sup>53</sup> The Court itself operated in part as a cultural entrepôt and even a critic like Mrs. Hutchinson found much there to approve, such as music. Moreover she had tried her hand at translating the *De Rerum Natura* of Lucretius, driven by 'youthfull curiositie to understand things I heard so much discourse of'. Later, as Puritanism bit deeper, she came to believe her action sinful in making more available, albeit only in manuscript, 'this dog' Lucretius with his 'foppish casuall dance of attoms'. One major factor however in alienating her from the Court was its evident Arminianism, the 'greate doctrine' of predestination having grown out of fashion with the prelates.<sup>54</sup>

The sacramental aspect of English Arminianism was closely connected with the recrudescence of religious art at this time. New painted glass windows in churches, especially crucifixion scenes, are a marked feature of the 1630s and the best known artist in this medium is Abraham van Linge, originally from Emden.<sup>55</sup> But the Caroline

<sup>52</sup> Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the life of Colonel Hutchinson* (ed. J. Sutherland, London, 1973), p. 46; O. Millar, 'Charles I, Honthorst and van Dyck', *Burlington Magazine*, XCVI (1954), p. 37; P.R.O. SP 16/383 fo. 66.

<sup>53</sup> K. Weber, *Lucius Cary, Second Viscount Falkland* (New York, 1940); J. Jacquot, 'Sir Charles Cavendish and his Learned Friends', *Annals of Science*, VIII (1952), 13-27; *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals* (ed. L. C. Loyd and D. M. Stenton for the Northamptonshire Record Society, XV (1950), pp. XXI-XXX; R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Norfolk Assembly* (London, 1957), pp. 17-40; R. B. Davis, *George Sandys, Poet Adventurer* (London, 1955), pp. 227-54, 265-6. This book has an important appendix entitled 'Sandys and the King's Privy Chamber', pp. 283-5.

<sup>54</sup> Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs*, pp. 28-9, 34; British Library, Additional MS. 19, 333, fos. 2v, 4r-v.

<sup>55</sup> M. Archer, 'English Painted Glass in the Seventeenth Century: the Early Work of Abraham van Linge', *Apollo* (January 1975), p. 30.

Court is most famous, or infamous, for its patronage of the stage. Although Prynne's monumental attack on the theatre, delivered in his *Histrion-Mastix*, did not appear until 1633 he was gathering material for it, so he says, from the later 1620s – at the same time, that is, as he was writing hundreds of pages against Arminianism. *Histrion-Mastix* like *The Perpetuities of a Regenerate Man's Estate*, was licensed for the press by one of Archbishop Abbot's chaplains, the Archbishop sharing with Prynne the same basic hostility to the theatre and Arminianism. In the dedicatory epistle to *Histrion-Mastix* Prynne complains that more and more people are attending plays and that new theatres are being built to meet the demand. Playbooks, says Prynne, are 'now more vendible than the choicest sermons' and they are being printed at the rate of twenty thousand a year. Playhouses are the 'divel's chappels', teaching 'atheisme, heathenisme, prophanesse' and that 'Epicurisme' of which he also complains in *Healthes: Sicknesse*. Indeed Prynne suggests that playwrights are preaching an alternative 'libertine' religion which goes hand in hand with the 'Pelagian errors of the times', their plays being the 'grand empoysoners of all grace'. The fallen sons of Adam are merely confirmed in their state of carnal gracelessness by attending the theatre.<sup>56</sup>

An example of the kind of interrelationship envisaged by Prynne is the playwright and clergyman William Cartwright, whose plays slightly post-date *Histrion-Mastix*. The Arminianism of Cartwright is manifest in his writings. Thus in some verses of 1634 to Brian Duppa, Dean of Christ Church and soon to be a bishop, he speaks of:

Men that do itch (when they have eate) to note  
 The chief distinction 'twixt the sheep and goat;  
 That do no questions relish but what be  
 Bord'ring upon the absolute decree,  
 And then haste home, lest they should miss the lot  
 Of venting reprobation, whiles 'tis hot.

Cartwright also translated into English the superb elegy of Grotius on Arminius 'searcher of truth's deepest part'. His play *The Ordinary*, which as the title indicates is set in a tavern, contains scoffing references to the 'elect' and includes among the cast of those 'good-fellow

<sup>56</sup> *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640* (ed. E. Arber, 5 vol., London, 1875-94), IV, 188, 207. For Archbishop Abbot's attitude towards plays see P.R.O. SP 14/80 fo. 177v. William Prynne, *Histrion-Mastix* (London, 1633), sigs. \*3r-v, \*\*2v, pp. 37, 101, 511-12, 826-7, 961-2, 964, 992 and *Healthes: Sicknesse* (London, 1628), sigs. B7, D4. Examination of the Stationers' Register indicates that during the early 1630s some ten plays per year were being licensed and that Prynne envisages editions of about two thousand copies each.

pastors' who were such anathema to Prynne. A comedy, *The Ordinary* is generally ribald and irreverent. Another play by Cartwright, *The Royal Slave*, incorporates a drinking song with the chorus:

Then laugh we, and quaffe we, untill our rich noses  
Grow red, and contest with our chaplets of roses.<sup>57</sup>

This echoes lines from the Greek collection of poetry known as the *Anacreontea*, particularly two pieces entitled by their later seventeenth-century translators 'Roses' and 'The Epicure'.<sup>58</sup> To put Cartwright's song in perspective, however, we would note that it purports to have been written by a prisoner seeking to keep up his morale.

The Cambridge counterpart of Cartwright, who had been a Student of Christ Church, Oxford, was the layman Thomas Randolph, Fellow of Trinity College. The manuscript of *The Drinking Academy*, a play ascribed to Randolph, is prefaced with an unflattering epigram about the Synod of Dordrecht which describes the participants as a 'knot of knaves' and their deliberations as so much 'wind'. Randolph's comedy *Aristippus or the Joviall Philosopher* was published in 1630, and early on in the play one the characters says that at Cambridge University 'they are all so infected with Aristippus his Arminianism, they can preach no doctrine but sack and red noses'.<sup>59</sup> Although Randolph evidently intends this as a caricature, he none the less implies that a link was thought to exist between the Arminian theology of free will and ancient Epicureanism. Aristippus was the founder of the Cyrenaic school of hedonism, which to some extent anticipated Epicurus. Yet there are marked differences in their moral teaching. Both philosophers hold that pleasure is the aim of life but Epicurus defines this as 'absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul', whereas Aristippus means a more positive physical indulgence. Epicurus is particularly concerned to free men from anxiety, by means of 'sobre reasoning, searching out the ground of every choice and avoidance, and banishing those beliefs through which the greatest tumults take possession of the soul'. As an example of the latter he instances the 'yoke of destiny'. Pleasure for Epicurus is 'not an unbroken succession of drinking bouts and of revelry', and he

<sup>57</sup> *The Plays and Poems of William Cartwright* (ed. G. B. Evans, Madison, 1951), pp. 223, 283, 299, 455-6, 497-500; William Prynne, *The Perpetuities of a Regenerate Man's Estate* (London, 1626), sig. \*\*1.

<sup>58</sup> *The Poems and Translations of Thomas Stanley* (ed. G. M. Crump, Oxford, 1962), p. 77; *The Works of Mr. A. Cowley* (ed. R. Hurd, 2 vol., London, 1809), I, 79.

<sup>59</sup> *The Drinking Academy. A Play by Thomas Randolph* (ed. H. E. Rollins and S. A. Tannenbaum, Cambridge Mass., 1930), p. 1; *Poetical and Dramatic Works by Thomas Randolph* (ed. W. C. Hazlitt, 2 vol., London, 1875), p. 10.

thinks it 'impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely and well and justly'.<sup>60</sup>

In practice however the two hedonisms of Aristippus and Epicurus are not always easy to distinguish. This can be seen from some of the ballads recorded in the Stationers' Register during the 1630s and intended to reach a much wider audience than the plays. For instance *A Mess of Good Fellowes*, by Martin Parker, extols the virtues of social drinking as conducive to 'heart's ease' and 'a contented mind'. The nineteenth-century editor of this ballad was adamant that it 'is one of that numerous class of productions in which, under the plea of being "jovial blades", "good fellows", and other such rubbish, men sought to excuse themselves for spending all that they had earned towards their own support and that of their families, upon the selfish gratification of drinking to excess'. William Prynne would have agreed with him. But Parker's drinker is concerned to 'recreate his sense' after working hard all day, and furthermore to philosophize:

He that doth enjoy his health,  
and a competent means withall,  
What need he to pine for wealth  
but take what to him doth befall?<sup>61</sup>

With Richard Climsall's *Roaring Dick of Dover* the balance swings more clearly in the direction of Aristippus:

He that hath abundant treasure,  
hence shall nothing beare away:  
Then let's take some part of pleasure,  
drinke and sing and freely pay.

Nevertheless Dick counsels sensibly that a wife should join her husband in tavern or alehouse rather than become a scold.<sup>62</sup> Given the present state of research into the history of ballads it does not seem possible to say whether Parker and Climsall were being in the least original here, although their Hedonistic themes certainly overlapped

<sup>60</sup> W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* (5 vol., Cambridge, 1962-78), III, 490-99; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, II, 657, 659, 665.

<sup>61</sup> H. E. Rollins, *An Analytical Index to the Ballad-Entries (1557-1709) in the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London* (Chapel Hill, 1924), pp. 152, 199; *The Roxburghe Ballads* (ed. W. Chappell and J. W. Ebsworth, 9 vol., Hertford, 1869-99), II, 142-8.

<sup>62</sup> *The Pepys Ballads* (ed. H. E. Rollins, 8 vol., Cambridge Mass., 1929-32), II, 234-8.

with those of the Caroline stage. Parker was soon to be dubbed 'the prelat's poet' because of his ballads against the Scots.<sup>63</sup>

The Arminian dramatist Cartwright was a great admirer of Ben Jonson, 'father of poets', as was his patron Duppa who in 1638 edited a volume of poems in honour of Jonson.<sup>64</sup> Their admiration was shared by Sir William Davenant, successor to Jonson in the office of Poet Laureate. Davenant, thanking Duppa in verse for his homage to Jonson, discusses the role of faith and reason and urges him:

Teach faith to rule, but with such temp'rate law,  
As reason not destroys, yet keeps't in awe.

Later, as part of the long poem *Gondibert*, Davenant expresses views about predestination which are probably his own:

Doth not belief of being destin'd draw  
Our reason to presumption or dispaire?  
If destiny be not, like human law,  
To be repeal'd, what is the use of prayer?

This same poem reveals Davenant to be a supporter of the new natural philosophy, particularly the Baconian variety.<sup>65</sup> Another 'son' of Ben Jonson, if a rather rebellious one, was the court poet Sir John Suckling.<sup>66</sup> In his *Account of Religion by Reason*, dated 1637, Suckling comments on the resurrection of the body: 'it were hard, when we see every petty chymick in his little shop bring into one body things of the same kind, though scatter'd and disorder'd, that we should not allow the great maker of all things to do the same in his own universe'. He contrasts this with the view that 'man corrupted into dust is scattered almost into infinite', apparently opposing Epicurus to Aristotle – atoms versus infinitely divisible matter. Writing in verse to John Hales of Eton, at about the same period, Suckling imagines him debating about 'predestination' or 'reconciling three in one'.<sup>67</sup> This refers to Hales' interest in both the Arminian and Soci-

<sup>63</sup> H. E. Rollins, 'Martin Parker, Ballad Monger', *Modern Philology*, XVI (1918-19), 125.

<sup>64</sup> *Jonsonus Virbius: or the Memorie of Ben Johnson Revived* (ed. Brian Duppa, London, 1638), p. 34.

<sup>65</sup> Sir William Davenant, *The Shorter Poems, and Songs from the Plays and Masques* (ed. A. M. Gibbs, Oxford, 1972), pp. lii-iii, 79, 196; *Sir William Davenant's Gondibert* (ed. D. F. Gladish, Oxford, 1971), pp. 151-69.

<sup>66</sup> K. A. McEuen, *Classical Influence upon the Tribe of Ben* (Iowa, 1939), p. 12. Another member of the Jonson circle was Richard Corbett. *Op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>67</sup> *The Works of Sir John Suckling*. (ed. L. A. Beaurline and T. Clayton, 2 vol., Oxford, 1971), I, 70, 178-9, 265.

nian controversies, and it has been well said that 'the morality implicit in court poetry was... profoundly related to the religious disputes dividing Caroline England', with Jonson and his comrades of the Devil Tavern, in Fleet Street, ranged firmly against the Calvinists. Jonsonian advocacy of reason, the controller of the passions, complemented the Arminian defence of man as a creature not wholly corrupt. Suckling, however, was also conversant with French *libertin* poetry.<sup>68</sup>

One of the protégés of Suckling was the dramatist Shackerley Marmion, whose plays include *The Antiquary*. Veterano, the character of the title, serves to satirize, albeit in friendly fashion, an aspect of the contemporary virtuoso movement – the passion for collecting antiquities. He is described as gazing all day long at a statue without a nose and an allusion may be intended to the Earl of Arundel, the foremost English collector of antique sculpture. Arundel is often assumed to have been a crypto Roman Catholic, yet he patronized the anti-Calvinist Harsnett, employed the Dutch Remonstrant Junius and supported the Arminian Montagu against his critics.<sup>69</sup> Sculpture was indeed a consuming interest for Arundel. Nevertheless he was on good terms with the mathematician William Oughtred and towards the end of his life planned to colonize Madagascar, 'resolved to goe my selfe in person'. An English settlement on Madagascar was briefly established in 1645, but of Arundel's involvement little more now seems to survive than a fine portrait by Van Dyck. The picture shows the Earl seated beside a large globe and pointing to the island of Madagascar, while the Countess holds a universal ring dial for finding both latitude and time; the librarian Junius stands behind them. Madagascar became a potent myth during the late 1630s, desire for wealth mingling with the idea of a Garden of Eden inhabited by noble savages and contributing thereby to a sense of moral relativism.<sup>70</sup>

Come 1641 the authors of the Grand Remonstrance described their opponents as an unholy alliance of 'Arminians and Libertines', which

<sup>68</sup> R. M. Smuts, *The Culture of Absolutism at the Court of Charles I* (Princeton Ph.D. thesis, 1976), pp. 231-5; F. O. Henderson, 'Traditions of *Précieux* and *Libertin* in Suckling's Poetry', *Journal of English Literary History*, IV (1937), 281-8.

<sup>69</sup> *The Dramatic Works of Shackerley Marmion* (ed. W. H. Logan and J. Maidment, Edinburgh and London, 1875), p. 210; K. Sharpe, 'The Earl of Arundel, his Circle and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-28', in *Faction and Parliament* (ed. K. Sharpe, Oxford, 1978), p. 238; M. A. Tierney, *The History and Antiquities of... Arundel* (London, 1834), pp. 431-4; *The Correspondence of John Cosin*, I, 85, 91.

<sup>70</sup> M. F. S. Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence and Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1921), pp. 346, 416-20, 506-8; Sir William Davenant, *The Shorter Poems...*, pp. 10-21; L. B. Wright, 'The Noble Savage of Madagascar in 1640', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, IV (1943), 112-18.

was being manipulated by ‘Papists’, and in so doing they intimated the existence of two competing world views. The French term *libertin*, however, describes more accurately than does libertine the nature of the forces arrayed against English Calvinism. For *libertin* thought involves speculative attitudes to religion and science as well as morality. The ideas of Epicurus tend to provide the positive content.<sup>71</sup> Arminianism became the religious ally of English *libertinage* because its exponents sought to rehabilitate natural man by denying predestinarian dogma.<sup>72</sup> Cradled in scepticism, Arminians and *libertins* alike embraced free will.

<sup>71</sup> *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 207; J. S. Spink, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-168.

<sup>72</sup> R. Pintard, *Le libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1943), pp. 49-51, 339-41.

## 5. Calvinism and National Consciouness: the Dutch Republic as the New Israel

G. GROENHUIS

ALTHOUGH political economic and social, as well as religious, causes all played a part in the revolt of the Netherlands, the nationalism, borne of that struggle, bore an unmistakably religious stamp. For the Calvinists the survival of the nation was indissolubly bound up with the continued existence of the Reformed Church and vice versa.<sup>1</sup> In one of the Beggars' Songs *Van de Verlossinghe van Leyden* (On the Deliverance of Leiden) this view is expressed in the following way:

They fought for their native country  
And for the word of the Lord  
which was planted there.<sup>2</sup>

The struggle with Spain was seen as God's struggle and from that conviction the Calvinists derived the strength necessary to wage war against a world power. The Bible, especially the Old Testament, was a source of inspiration to the Calvinists. They felt a special kinship with the great biblical figures and they repeatedly drew parallels between the Jewish people and themselves. From his exile in Emden the Reformed Protestant merchant from Amsterdam, Laurens Jacobsz. Reael, exhorted his compatriots in Holland:

Fly fly from Babel my chosen people.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Dankbaar, 'Het calvinistisch volkskarakter in het geestelijk lied, bepaaldelijk in Valerius' "Nederlandsche Gedenckclanck"' in *Hoogtepunten uit het nederlandsche calvinisme in de zestiende eeuw* (Haarlem, 1946), p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> *Het Geuzenliedboek. Uitgegeven uit het nalatenschap van E. T. Kuiper* (ed. P. Leendertz, 2 vol., Zutphen, 1924), I, 241.

<sup>3</sup> R. B. Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam. De kerk der hervorming in de gouden eeuw* (2 vol., Amsterdam, 1965-7), I, 73-4.

And when Reael called the Dutch rebels the 'Christian nation' he succinctly expressed the dual connexion.<sup>4</sup>

Several Dutch historians have remarked on this Calvinist notion of election and the identification with the people of Israel.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, most historians do not accept that the Dutch Calvinists considered themselves as the inhabitants of a New Israel, as an elect nation, though they would admit that analogies were often drawn between the experiences of Israel and the Dutch Republic.

The notion of an elect nation might flourish among English-speaking Puritans but not among their counterparts in the Dutch Republic.<sup>6</sup> In my opinion these historians are mistaken. The study of Calvinist literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth century strongly suggests that the idea of Holland as a new Israel evolved out of the numerous comparisons that were made with the history of the Jews. Epistemologically the notion fitted easily into the world-picture of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. It can be considered as providing the basis of a political theory which took shape in the same time. Besides, this idea coincided exactly with Calvinist views on the proper relationship that should exist between Church and State.

The idea originated in the pamphlets and songs of the Beggars.<sup>7</sup> In this literature the history of God's dealings with the people of Israel is hold up as an example to the Dutch rebels. In a *Nieuw Liedeken* (New Song), probably from 1575, we read:

You Princes should know  
And remember at this time,  
Read through all the Prophets  
To see how Israel fared.<sup>8</sup>

The protagonists in the Dutch drama were compared with biblical persons. The enemy was called 'the Spanish Sennacherib', 'Jezebel's brood, Cain's brood'. William of Orange and later his son Maurice

<sup>4</sup> *Het Geuzenliedboek*, I, 95.

<sup>5</sup> C. Busken Huet, *Het land van Rembrandt. Studiën over de nederlandse beschaving in de zeventiende eeuw* (2 vol., 7 edn., Utrecht, 1954), II, 72-3; P. C. Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de nederlandse stam* (6 vol., 3 edn., Amsterdam and Antwerp, 1961-2), II, 405, 581 and 584; A. J. C. Rüter, 'De nederlandse natie en het nederlandse volkskarakter' in his *Historische studies over mens en samenleving* (ed. T. J. G. Locher *et al.*, Assen, 1967), p. 309.

<sup>6</sup> E. H. Kossmann, *In Praise of the Dutch Republic: some seventeenth-century attitudes* (London, 1963), p. 12; H. Smitskamp, *Calvinistisch nationaal besef van Nederland vóór het midden der 17de eeuw* (The Hague, 1947), pp. 13-19.

<sup>7</sup> See P. A. M. Geurts, *De nederlandse opstand in de pamfletten 1566-1584* (Nijmegen, 1956).

<sup>8</sup> *Het Geuzenliedboek*, I, 146.

were called 'David driven away by Saul's pride, our Moses, the good Moses and Gideon'. The authors described Alva and the king of Spain as Pharaoh, Goliath and Saul. The Spaniards were called *pharaonisten*.<sup>9</sup> On the occasion of William of Orange's entry into Brussels in 1577 *tableaux vivants* depicted scenes such as 'Moses delivering the Jews' and 'David with the head of Goliath'.<sup>10</sup> The image of the cruel Pharaoh oppressing the poor people was a special favourite. One of the Beggar's Songs of 1597 was cast in the form of a prayer on behalf of those parts of the Low Countries still then unfree:

O supreme Head sublime  
Come to the aid of the sheep  
Who still sigh and tremble  
In Egypt's pastures.<sup>11</sup>

The crossing of the Red Sea was also taken by some painters as an allusion to the Revolt.

Contemporaries also frequently used biblical imagery in their correspondence. In 1572 Willem Bardes, a zealous Calvinist from Amsterdam, addressed a letter to François van Boshuysen, the redoubtable opponent of the Sea Beggars, in an endeavour to convince him that he had chosen the wrong side. The downfall of those who oppose God's will is well-attested by history: Pharaoh, Saul, Nero, Julian the Apostate and many more. The profound changes now taking place in Holland can only be the work of God. And Bardes went on to draw an explicit parallel between the rising against the tyranny of Alva and the revolt of the Tribes of Israel against the harsh rule of King Rehoboam (Kgs. 12).<sup>12</sup>

In the seventeenth century comparisons between the Republic and Israel remained an important theme, and became, indeed, still more elaborate. The preacher-cum-poet Jacob Revijs wrote thus about the Twelve Years' Truce:

The Jews marched through the desert forty years  
In trouble, danger and want of everything;  
But in the end and after that sad time  
Joshua led them into the promised land.  
The war forced us to march through the desert for forty years;  
Now the Truce opens to us the promised land.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 162, 177, 226, 296, 318; II, 1, 73, 79, 153, 320.

<sup>10</sup> Geurts, *De nederlandse opstand*, p. 289.

<sup>11</sup> *Het Geuzenliedboek*, II, 65.

<sup>12</sup> Pieter Christiaensz. Bor, *Oorsprongk, begin, en vervolgh der Nederlandsche oorlogen* (5 vol., Amsterdam, 1621-34), I, bk. VI, fo. 294-5.

<sup>13</sup> *Die tyrannie verdrijven. Godsdienst- en onafhankelijkheidsstrijd in de 16e en 17e*

Joost van den Vondel, 'the prince of our poets', added to his biblical play *Het Pascha* (The Passover) a comparison of the deliverance of the children of Israel with the liberation of the United Provinces, in which all the well-known themes are found.<sup>14</sup> The historian Everhard van Reyd compared the five Nassau brothers with the five Maccabean brothers.<sup>15</sup> Johan van den Sande, who continued Van Reyd's book after his death, elaborated that comparison in a discourse about the similarity between the Dutch and Jewish States: he insisted both wars 'were very similar as regards the causes as well as the progress and results'.<sup>16</sup> In *'t Verwerd Europa* (Europe in Confusion), published in 1675, Petrus Valkenier compared the French king Louis XIV to King Nebuchadnezzar and the United Provinces, under threat of occupation by the French, to Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup>

Parallels between the Dutch Republic and Israel occur most frequently in the writings of certain strict Reformed ministers. As pietists the two Teellincks, Udemans, Souterius, Van Lodensteyn, Van de Velde and Witsius are usually considered as standing outside the mainstream of the Reformed Church in the mid-seventeenth century, but we should remember that Pietism then still formed part of the Calvinist orthodoxy.<sup>18</sup> They drew parallels between Holland and Israel because God had done, and was still doing, great things with both peoples. The belief that events in the United Provinces could not have taken place without God's special blessing was widely shared. Jodocus van Lodensteyn, a minister in Utrecht, referred in this connexion to 'the common feelings of the people'.<sup>19</sup> When the minister Jacobus Lydius wrote in *'t Verhoogde Nederland* (The Netherlands Exalted):

But above all I thank Him  
Who makes Holland Jerusalem<sup>20</sup>

eeuw in *Spectrum van de nederlandse letterkunde* (ed. M. C. A. van der Heijden, 25 vol., Utrecht and Antwerp, 1967-72), VII, 148.

<sup>14</sup> *De werken van Vondel. Volledige en geïllustreerde tekstuitgave* (ed. J. F. M. Sterck and H. W. E. Moller, 10 vol., Amsterdam, 1927-37), I.

<sup>15</sup> Everhard van Reyd, *Oorspronck ende voortganck vande Nederlantsche oorlogen... zedert den Jare 1566 tot het Jaer 1601. Derde editie... vermeerdeert... ende hier is... by gevoeght 't vervolg van 1601, tot de Jare Anno 1644* (Amsterdam, 1644), fo. 81.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, II, fo. 18.

<sup>17</sup> Petrus Valkenier, *'t Verwerd Europa ofte politijke en historische beschryvinge der waare fundamenten en oorsaken van de oorlogen en revolutien in Europe, voornamentlijk in en omtrent de Nederlanden zedert den jaaren 1664* (Amsterdam, 1675), pp. 774-5.

<sup>18</sup> See S. van der Linde, *Het gereformeerd protestantisme* (Nijkerk, 1957), p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Jodocus van Lodensteyn, *Beschouwinge van Zion ofte aandagten en opmerkingen over den tegenwoordige toestand van 't gereformeerden Christen Volck* (Utrecht, 1678), p. 245.

<sup>20</sup> Jacobus Lydius, *'t Verheerlikte, ofte 't Verhoogde Neder-land* (Dordrecht, 1668), fo. lv<sup>o</sup>.

he was not adopting, as Kossmann believes,<sup>21</sup> an exceptional standpoint; on the contrary he was expressing the common opinion that God had raised up Holland as He had done Israel.

The Grand Pensionary Jacob Cats, for many years an elder in the Reformed Church, expressed the same sentiments when he told his compatriots:

Believe it, Dutch people, God's own blessing  
Is placed in Holland, is lying in Holland.<sup>22</sup>

Contrary to what Smitskamp thought<sup>23</sup> these ideas fit into the Calvinist theology of some sort of chosen people. In the opening chapter of the canons of Dordrecht, which deals with election and reprobation, the matter of an elect people is mentioned briefly, when the orthodox party expressly refuted the error 'that the cause why God is sending his Gospel more to one people than to another, is not only a matter of His grace, but because one people is better and more worthy than another to whom the Gospel is not given'.<sup>24</sup>

The particular election of the Netherlands by God was a matter of fact for many people,<sup>25</sup> but it was of course among the ministers that the notion was most freely stated. The idea of the Dutch Israel was given its most elaborate treatment in the writings of two ministers belonging to the pietist circle. The first by Abraham van de Velde, a minister who had been banished from Utrecht in 1660 on account of his outspoken opposition to the continued existence of chapters there, entitled *De Wonderen des Allerhoogsten* (The Miracles of the Almighty) was published in 1668; the second by the minister Herman Witsius, called *De Twist des Heeren met syn Wyngaert* (The Quarrel of the Lord with his Vineyard) appeared in 1669.<sup>26</sup> Van de Velde as well as Witsius repeatedly used the notions Israel and Jerusalem when referring to the Dutch Republic. Witsius, especially, expressed it very clearly:

<sup>21</sup> Kossmann, *In Praise*, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted by G. S. Overdiep, *Onze Renaissance in proza* (Amsterdam, 1939), p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Smitskamp, *Calvinistisch nationaal besef*, pp. 14-18.

<sup>24</sup> For the Canons of Dordt see L. H. Wagenaar, *Van strijd en overwinning* (Utrecht, 1909), Appendix I, VII.

<sup>25</sup> See K. W. Swart, *The Miracle of the Dutch Republic as seen in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1967), p. 18.

<sup>26</sup> Abraham van de Velde, *De Wonderen des Allerhoogsten ofte Aanwijzinge van de oorzaken, wegen en middelen, waardoor de Geünieerde Provinciën uyt hare vorige onderdrukking zoo wonderbaarlijk... zijn verheven* (ed. A. Fischer, Utrecht, 1874); Herman Witsius, *De Twist des Heeren met syn Wyngaert* (4 edn., Utrecht, 1710).

Or do you wish me to speak more plainly? You are God's own people to whom the Lord has come so close and whom He has elected to his own in a special way and of whom he therefore reasonably expects more than of the rest.<sup>27</sup>

What significance should we attach to these parallels between the United Provinces and Israel and to the identification of the two peoples? Such parallels are, as we have already observed, characteristic of contemporary epistemology.<sup>28</sup> Understanding, it was commonly supposed, proceeded by drawing comparisons and for that reason pains were taken to establish parallels. In this way the resemblances between events and objects could be made manifest and their significance disclosed. This epistemology was based on the notion that the universe as a harmonious hierarchically-ordered Creation did not change essentially. In fact nothing new ever occurred; everything happening in this world was a reflexion of one and the same reality. Vondel gave striking expression to this particular experience of history when he wrote:

...nothing, no matter how strange, occurs to-day that has not already happened of old; for as the wheel of fortune turns, the same things repeatedly come to the top in other periods, places and persons.<sup>29</sup>

It is no accident that the image of the 'mirror' recurs so often in seventeenth century literature. Behind the common use of this symbol lies concealed a world-picture which saw in the humdrum reality an illustration of universal reality, ultimate truth. To Reformed ministers like Van de Velde and Witsius the Kingdom of God shaped that ultimate truth. They saw history as a long prelude to the heavenly Jerusalem. God had made a covenant of work with Adam which was changed into a covenant of grace with the people of Israel and was renewed into a covenant with the chosen people from all mankind. In the words of Jodocus van Lodensteyn:

What would all this mean but that the Lord, with his chosen people, who are indeed the counterparts of the Jews, would restore that voluntary kingdom of which we spoke before, contracted with Adam and destroyed by his Fall.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Witsius, *De Twist des Heeren*, p. 388.

<sup>28</sup> For seventeenth-century theories of knowledge see M. Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris, 1966) and W. H. Greenleaf, *Order, Empiricism and Politics. Two Traditions of English Political Thought, 1500-1700* (London, New York and Toronto, 1964).

<sup>29</sup> Quoted by J. Prinsen, 'Vondels proza' in *De werken van Vondel*, I, 81.

<sup>30</sup> Van Lodensteyn, *Beschouwinge van Zion*, p. 269.

Israel here stands for the Church of Christ, the Jewish people the holy congregation of the elect, the invisible or mystic communion, the Body of Christ.<sup>31</sup> The notion of the Dutch Israel is nowhere to be seen, for Israel stands for the community of the elect chosen from all mankind. But the contradiction is more apparent than real, for the Dutch are favoured with a special place within the congregation of the elect. As Canaan was honoured to serve as an abode for the people of Israel, the Netherlands have now been chosen as the dwelling-place of God's second Israel. One of Valerius' songs puts it this way:

Almighty God, Thou who hast planted us with thy hand  
to be thy people here in this land.<sup>32</sup>

And Herman Witsius therefore warns:

Ought we not since our country has become a second Canaan to hallow God as befits a second Canaan, for our country is a dim reflection of the heavenly fatherland.<sup>33</sup>

Church and Nation are here bound up with one another. Far from being separate entities, they form in the view of Acronius two rings one inside the other. The relationship is symbolically represented by the Temple on Mount Sion on one of the commemorative medals in honour of the Synod of Dordrecht. The legend on the medal reads: 'Religione asserta erunt ut Mons Sion'. The minister Streso used the same image in his sermon on the occasion of the *Grote Vergadering* (Great Assembly) in The Hague in 1651 when he likened the official Dutch Church to a city on a hill and a candle on a candlestick.<sup>35</sup>

A third illustration of the special bond between Church and Nation occurs in the poems of Revius. Taking the well-known image of the Church as the Bride of Christ, he calls the Dutch Republic 'the abode of the Bride'.<sup>36</sup> The Church of Christ was the community of the chosen to which God had elected the Dutch people by means of his great miracles. Both were images of the true Canaan, the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>37</sup> This metaphor was not peculiar to the Dutch Calvinists,

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>32</sup> Cited by Dankbaar, *Hoogtepunten*, p. 180.

<sup>33</sup> Witsius, *De Twist des Heeren*, p. 119.

<sup>34</sup> Wagenaar, *Van strijd*, p. 117.

<sup>35</sup> E. J. W. Posthumus Meyjes, *Kerkelijk 's-Gravenhage in vroeger eeuwen. Schetsen uit de geschiedenis der hervormde gemeente* (The Hague, 1918), p. 28.

<sup>36</sup> *De Tyrannie verdrijven in Spectrum van de nederlandse letterkunde*, VII, 128.

<sup>37</sup> An image that also calls to mind Gal. 4: 26.

who indeed freely admitted its use by the Puritans. As early as 1622, in a verse epistle, the Calvinist Constantijn Huygens referred to the 'Britse Israel'<sup>38</sup> and in *De Wonderen des Allerhoogsten* by Van de Velde 'Israel in England' is also mentioned.<sup>39</sup> In view of the close ties maintained with the English Puritans, the Dutch Calvinists must have known that the Puritans also cherished the notion of the 'City upon a Hill'. But this did not prevent Dutch Calvinists from supposing that God had special purposes for their nation.

If, in the view of Van Lodesteyn, the image of the Netherlands as a new Canaan, the 'Christian Nation' and as a new Israel, were commonplace, the minister from Utrecht goes on to say that it would be foolish for the Dutch nation to suppose that it could not forfeit the Lord's favour. He warned that it should not be taken for granted that the Lord kept a special watch over the Dutch Republic... 'He can transfer his candlestick'.<sup>40</sup> Udemans, Van de Velde and Witsius never tired in their sermons of urging repentance, for God's people had to be worthy of their election. But as God was at work in the Republic certain political consequences followed and these were set forth by certain orthodox ministers.

For the orthodox Calvinists the justification for the Dutch Republic was as the 'abode of the Bride'; in other words, the State existed for the sake of the Church. The Bible, especially the Old Testament, showed how this ideal had been realized. Acronius and Walaeus, likewise Calvinist theologians, pointed out that such matters should be studied from the Scriptures.<sup>41</sup> The temporal as well as the ecclesiastical authorities should abide by God's plan. The temporal powers should follow the example of those kings of Israel who had served the Lord,<sup>42</sup> as the ministers, elders and deacons of the Reformed Church should take as their model the priests, Levites and Elders of Israel.<sup>43</sup> In principle, temporal and ecclesiastical spheres were separate, but in obedience to God's commission, the preachers, who considered themselves as His envoys naturally emphasized the consequences of this commission. A Calvinist political theory therefore developed with a strong Old Testament character. This tradition took shape in the mid-seventeenth century, and has even now not entirely disappear-

<sup>38</sup> 'T Hoge huis te Muiden. Teksten uit de Muiderkring in *Spectrum van de nederlandse letterkunde*, VIII, 17.

<sup>39</sup> Van de Velde, *De Wonderen des Allerhoogsten*, p. 355.

<sup>40</sup> Van Lodesteyn, *Beschouwingen van Zion*, p. 245.

<sup>41</sup> D. Nobbs, *Theocracy and Toleration. A Study of the Disputes in Dutch Calvinism from 1600 to 1650* (Cambridge, 1938), p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

ed.<sup>44</sup> It is astonishing to discover how closely the sermons of the minister Kersten, the leader of the small Calvinist *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij* from 1918 until 1945, in which he called for repentance, resemble sermons preached on the same theme in the seventeenth century:

God Himself led us out of the Roman Catholic oppression and gathered us round the Banner of the Gospel... The living God stood in the middle of us. The Peoples roundabout trembled when the old lion of Orange moved. No, not because of these princes of Orange, but because the Lord himself precedes our hosts. His hand led us, He makes us the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Our history is a sequence of divine miracles.<sup>45</sup>

At the heart of this Calvinist political theory lay the struggle against the idolatry of Rome, the whore of Babylon. This conviction was already present in the sixteenth century. In a poem *Anti-Christ's Nieuwe Jaer 1571* Laurens Reael describes the divine commission in these militant terms:

Set forth you who escaped the gallows,  
Remember what crimes Babylon has committed against my people,  
Wreak vengeance as my faithful envoys  
Repay twofold the wrongs done to you.<sup>46</sup>

In a pamphlet of 1583<sup>47</sup> the political sentiments are thus outlined:

'...let these Netherlands who are attached to the [Reformed] religion, make an alliance in the shape of a republic, elect a pious army commander, experienced in warfare, who will promote the religion, destroy popery, practise justice and fight the war of the Lord according to His Word...'<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> In South Africa the Calvinist notion of election has become linked to the theory of apartheid. Black people are considered Canaanites, condemned by God to serve the Second Israel. See P. G. J. Korteweg, *Arm man met luxe leven. Journalistieke mémoires* (Rotterdam, 1977), p. 100. For the history of the Calvinists in South Africa see W. A. de Klerk, *The Puritans in Africa. A History of Afrikanerdom* (Harmondsworth, 1976).

<sup>45</sup> M. Golverdingen, *Ds. G. H. Kersten. Facetten van zijn leven en werk* (2nd edn., Amersfoort, 1972), p. 123.

<sup>46</sup> Evenhuis, *Ook dat was Amsterdam*, I, 74.

<sup>47</sup> Entitled *Een Christelijcke ende waerachtighe waerschouwinghe, end wederlegginghe aller die segghen dat de Christenen mogen verbont maecken metten ongeloo-vigen in de krijgshandel, om deur hun macht beschermt te worden, ende voornamelijk teghen een boecxken gheintituleert, waerschouwinghe aen alle goede Christenen*. Printed by Bor, *Oorsprongk*, II, bk. XVIII, fo. 27 ff.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, fo. 29.

The bellicose spirit found in the Old Testament inspired many Calvinists, for here one could see how Israel proved its election by fighting against the surrounding heathens. The Dutch Canaan had to prove itself in the same way. Article XXXVI of the Belgic Confession states unequivocally that the civil magistrate wields the sword in order to root out idolatry and false religion and to overthrow the Kingdom of the Antichrist.<sup>49</sup> When the Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt stated in his defence that the Act of Seclusion had delivered the United Provinces from war, 'which is the great slavery and deprived us of the freedom of trade', an anonymous Calvinist replied:

Concerning the war being hard and bitter, if one fights justly, the war is not slavery, unless one says that the administration of justice is slavery: for war is an exercise of the highest Justice;...<sup>50</sup>

In the *Vrymoedige Aenspraeck aen Syn Hoogheyt de Heere Prince van Orangien* (Frank Address to His Highness the Lord Prince of Orange), written in 1650 by Maximiliaen Teellinck, a minister in the province of Zeeland, we find an admirably succinct statement of Calvinist political theory.<sup>51</sup> In seven political maxims he sets forth the consequences which followed from God's involvement with the Netherlands. His injunctions to the Dutch Israel may be conveniently epitomized as follows:

1. We owe our freedom to God and we must ensure that we never again bear 'the yoke of slavery'.
2. The Spaniards are still not to be trusted. What they could not win by waging war, they now seek to gain by making peace.
3. We must remain true to the Union of Utrecht and resolutely oppose any who should seek to depart from the Union.
4. We should maintain a strong army in the field to preserve 'Israel, our Fatherland'.
5. We should render thanks to the House of Orange because of all the benefits they have brought to 'Israel, our Fatherland' and remember for ever more how they delivered us, by the grace of God, from all our enemies.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, I, bk. I, fo. 35.

<sup>50</sup> Quoted by Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh, in ende omtrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden* (7 vol., The Hague, 1669-72), III 1037.

<sup>51</sup> The *Vrymoedige Aenspraeck* formed the dedication that Teellinck wrote for the edition of *Den Politycken Christen*, composed by his father Willem Teellinck, which he presented to William II. Apparently this Address was also published separately without the knowledge of Maximiliaen Teellinck, *Catalogus van de pamflettenverzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek* (ed. W. P. C. Knuttel, 9 vol., The Hague, 1889-1920), no. 6857.

6. We should maintain and seek to expand trade, the source of our country's prosperity, especially the trade of the West Indies Company so that Brazil may be recovered and the gospel proclaimed there.

7. We must maintain the true Reformed religion, the basis of all the above, the religion which has been to us as the Ark of the Covenant, in the host of the Israelites.<sup>52</sup>

There can be little doubt that Abraham van de Velde was familiar with these maxims. All these themes are discussed in his *De Wonderen des Allerhoogsten* with the same examples, sometimes indeed repeated verbatim. This is the core of what may be considered the Calvinist or Reformed tradition,<sup>53</sup> which originated in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, during the so-called *Nadere Reformatie*<sup>54</sup> (i.e. further or second Reformation) and which still remains the inspiration of certain small communities. Ds. Kersten in the twentieth century may be considered a lineal descendant of a tradition that can be traced back at least to those seventeenth-century divines, the Teellincks, Van de Velde and Witsius and which is represented in the eighteenth century by Jacobus Fruytier and in the nineteenth century by Isaac Da Costa and Groen van Prinsterer.<sup>55</sup>

According to this Reformed tradition God bestows his blessings on his Church, while with His rod He chastises the wicked authorities and people and exhorts them to be worthy of their calling. The foreign policy advocated by this tradition was clearcut. The struggle against Spain and Rome should continue to be prosecuted 'under the leadership of the prince of Orange', at home by means of a strong army of the United Provinces, overseas through the trading companies, especially the West Indies Company. In domestic politics these Calvinists stressed the need to maintain and strengthen the Union of Utrecht so that the United Provinces would become 'as one province', to promote the authority of the princes of Orange, to uphold the true religion while

<sup>52</sup> M. Teellinck, *Vrymoedige Aenspraec aen syn Hoogheyt de Heere Prince van Oraengien enz. gestelt tot waerschouwinghe ende noodighe opmerckingh in den verwerden en kommerlycken standt van ons lieve Vaderlandt* (Middelburg, 1650). See also M. T. Uit den Bogaard, *De gereformeerden en Oranje tijdens het eerste stadhouderloze tijdperk* (Groningen, 1954), p. 69.

<sup>53</sup> One may speak of a Calvinist political tradition as one does of a *holländische Tradition*, i.e. a Dutch foreign policy determined by the interests of the province of Holland. See J. C. Boogman, 'Die holländische Tradition in der niederländischen Geschichte', *Westfälische Forschungen* XV (1962), 96-105. For this Calvinist, or Reformed, tradition see C. Fahner, *De gereformeerde traditie. Aspecten van een ideële structuur in de Republiek in de jaren 1648-1672* (Utrecht, doctoraalscriptie, 1968). I am deeply indebted to this unpublished essay.

<sup>54</sup> On the *nadere reformatie* see Van der Linde, *Het gereformeerde protestantisme* and T. Brienens, *De prediking der nadere reformatie* (Amsterdam, 1974).

<sup>55</sup> See above note 45.

combatting popery, Pelagianism, Socianism and other false doctrines and to hallow the daily life of the Dutch nation.

The ideals of this Calvinist tradition have never been realized; at no time did the Dutch Republic resemble a theocracy led by God's elect. Several explanations may be offered for this failure. Although the number of the Calvinists increased during the seventeenth century they remained nevertheless a minority.<sup>56</sup> More importantly, a substantial proportion of the ruling class never became professed members of the Reformed Church, while others though they might join the Church, did not subscribe to the orthodox Calvinist doctrines. For that reason a Dutch Israel, in which secular and ecclesiastical leaders ruled in conformity with the Calvinist tradition, as this was summarized by Teellinck, never came to pass. Though the civil authorities protected the interests of the Reformed Church, these had to be weighed against the demands of other political and religious concerns. Whereas the minister kept their eyes fixed on Mount Sion, the regents were too preoccupied by the mundane business of keeping the peace to feel much enthusiasm for this vision.

Orthodox ministers, who like the prophets of the Old Testament pointed out to the civil authorities the need to fulfill the task entrusted them by God, discovered time and again that the idea of a militant Dutch Israel was at variance with the tolerant policy pursued by the leaders of the trading republic. Such ministers might be warned to be more circumspect; and, if they paid no heed, they might have their stipends suspended, or, still worse, face dismissal and banishment. Ds. Jodocus van Lodensteyn of Utrecht rightly complained in his *Beschouwing van Zion* (Contemplation of Sion) that a minister need not step very far out of line to be brought before the authorities:

...a man may be learned and wise and possess God's Spirit (an example to all, leading a godly life, hard working and labouring fruitfully in Christ's Church), but he has only to make a small mistake, that is in the view of the authorities, and the church is in trouble and will certainly perish if that man is not debarred and judgement pronounced within a few days...<sup>57</sup>

Van Lodensteyn did not have to look far for examples. In 1660 his colleagues Abraham van de Velde and Johannes Teellinck were dismissed and banished from Utrecht.<sup>58</sup> In such trials of strength between

<sup>56</sup> A substantial minority, though nevertheless a minority. For the relative strength of the confessions see 'Numerieke aspecten van de protestantisering in Noord-Nederland tussen 1656 en 1726. Debat van A. M. van der Woude, J. A. Faber en H. K. Roessingh, met J. A. de Kok, O.F.M. 'A. A. G. Bijdragen, XIII (1965), 149.

<sup>57</sup> Van Lodensteyn, *Beschouwing van Zion*, p. 232.

<sup>58</sup> Geyl, *Geschiedenis*, III, p. 720.

Church and State the civil authorities had the upper hand as the Reformed Church was in large measure dependent on the State. Even so famous an orthodox minister as Franciscus Ridderus hastened in 1665 to the town-hall of Rotterdam to apologize for a sermon in which he criticized the regents, fearful that his stipend would be stopped by the magistrates.<sup>59</sup> When the States of Holland in 1663 wished to exclude any reference in the public prayers to the prince of Orange, they succeeded in imposing their will on the ministers after resorting to the same sanctions.<sup>60</sup>

Besides, all manner of differences still existed within the Reformed Church despite the victory of the orthodox party at the Synod of Dordrecht in 1618-9. New theological differences arose: the adherents of the rigid professor Voetius of Utrecht were opposed by the more tolerant followers of professor Coccejus of Leiden. Coccejus showed a greater docility towards the authorities than Voetius, but even among the Voetian ministers some were known to be less rigorous than others. The ideals of the Calvinist tradition were in fact strongly defended by only a small minority. Many ministers adopted the motto of Gregorius Mees, an orthodox minister at Rotterdam: 'Watch and tread the middleway'.<sup>61</sup> In contrast to the small number of ministers who fearlessly preached repentance, there stood, as Hugo Visscher, a representative of the Calvinist tradition in the present century sadly observed, a majority of ministers who professed the golden mean.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover the differences in social standing between the dignitaries of the Reformed Church (the ministers, elders and deacons) and the civil authorities (the deputies in the provincial states, the magistrates and members of the town corporations) were less acute than has sometimes been supposed.<sup>63</sup> The ministers in the Dutch Republic of

<sup>59</sup> J. R. Callenbach, 'Kerkelijk leven' in *Rotterdam in de loop der eeuwen* (4 vol., Rotterdam, 1906-9), II, 50.

<sup>60</sup> G. D. J. Schotel, *De openbare eeredienst der Nederlandsch Hervormde Kerk in de 16e, 17e en 18e eeuw* (2nd edn., Leiden, 1906), p. 339.

<sup>61</sup> K. J. R. Harderwijk, *Naamlijst en levensbyzonderheden der predikanten die sedert de kerkhervorming in de Nederduitsche Hervormde en Waalsche gemeente te Rotterdam tot op dezen tijd in dienst geweest zijn* (Rotterdam, 1850), p. 50.

<sup>62</sup> H. Visscher, *Ondergang van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden* (2nd edn., Amsterdam, 1944), p. 147.

<sup>63</sup> Knappert's description of the Reformed ministers as 'democratic and plebeian' in origin, outlook and appeal calls to mind Macaulay's portrayal of the clergy of late Stuart England 'as, on the whole, a plebeian class'. L. Knappert, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsch Hervormde Kerk gedurende de 16e en 17e eeuw* (2 vol., Amsterdam, 1911-2), I, 168-72. For the rehabilitation of the Anglican clergy in the late seventeenth century see J. H. Pruett, *The Parish Clergy under the Later Stuarts. The Leicestershire Experience* (Urbana, Chicago and London, 1978).

the seventeenth century were drawn, for the most part, from the middle class. As graduates of the university they enjoyed the same education as the members of the ruling class and in the larger towns their salaries compared favourably with the average income of the upper middle class. In short, they had a substantial stake in the political and social *status quo*. We have already remarked that in the controversy about the public prayers this circumstance tempered their orangist and theocratic leanings. The consistories were no longer bastions of the common man, or centres of democratic opposition to the oligarchic town corporations. Elders were recruited from the upper and middle classes. Even regents served on the consistories. Indeed in some towns this was even prescribed: at Nijmegen, for example, half the elders were elected from among the magistrates. This explains why *commissarissen-politiek* (political commissaries) were not required everywhere to supervise the business of the consistories. And when such representatives of the magistrates made their appearance in the consistory – as in Amsterdam in 1630 and in Utrecht in 1660 – it was because relations between the magistrates and the consistories had become unduly strained. Conflicts were more likely to occur when the regent-elders did not set the tone in the town corporation.<sup>64</sup> Wherever such differences of opinion occurred the magistrates did not present a united front, but chose sides which often reflected existing factions.<sup>65</sup>

Though the importance of the Calvinist tradition on the political and social life of the Republic should not be exaggerated, anti-government pamphleteers were only too glad, in times of crisis, to appropriate the Calvinist tradition in their search for arguments against the regents and their policy of peace. Many elements of the Calvinist tradition occur in the pamphlets written against the Twelve Years' Truce, the Peace of Münster and De Witt's policies. These writings of which *Den Triumph van den Oorloge* (The Triumph of War) written in 1608 against the Truce is a good example, use the language of the Prophets of Israel. The war is here praised as the Lord's struggle and He is addressed as 'our supreme God of hosts', while in the Old Testament may be found, we are told, many examples of 'great slaughters', wrought in His name.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup> A. T. van Deursen draws attention to the 'aristocratic character' of the consistories in *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen. Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen, 1974), pp. 83-7.

<sup>65</sup> E.g. R. J. Kolman, *De reductie van Nijmegen (1591). Voor- en naspel* (Groningen, 1952), pp. 116-7.

<sup>66</sup> J. C. H. de Pater, *Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt in den strijd om het Twaalfjarig bestand* (Amsterdam, 1940), pp. 10-11.

The significance of this Calvinist tradition has not always been properly understood by Dutch historians. Poelhekke, for instance, considers Zeeland's opposition to the Peace of Münster as sabotage, conducted '...usually under cover of some pious humbug, the ingredients of which are not unfamiliar to us namely, yet again the re-affirmation of the Union, the Reformed religion and the army. Indeed this had been formally done in 1643 but had to be repeated before the recalcitrant province would consent to the mission to Münster'.<sup>67</sup> Likewise, there is a tendency among historians to discount the sincerity of Calvinist complaints about 'neglected Brazil' and to overlook the significance of the Calvinist ideals.<sup>68</sup> Of course, it would be simplistic to present such controversies as though principles alone were at stake, but the Calvinist tradition deserves proper consideration as one of several formative influences on Dutch politics.

The Calvinist notion of a Dutch Israel remained, however a source of frustration for the ministers of the Reformed Church because this could never be realized. Though the ministers might consider themselves as the 'envoys of God', they lacked the power to compel this second Canaan to behave in accordance with God's sacred law. In 1650 ds. Johan Picardt from Coevorden, published a curious little book entitled *Den prediger* (The Preacher) which was prompted by such frustrations.<sup>69</sup> The 'holy office of preaching', he claims, was not properly respected. Too few of the regents permitted their sons to enter the ministry. The stipends of the rural ministers were usually inadequate and often paid in arrears. Property which ought to have provided an income for the ministers had been misappropriated. Regents and burghers alike disparaged the ministers of God's Word. The ministers, he concluded, might occupy the most honourable office in society, but they were not treated in accordance with that position.

Picardt's view of the office of minister is probably typical of most Dutch *dominees*. The minister, though sensible of his high calling, was painfully aware that his standing in society did not match his divine commission. The prophetic vision of Christ's Church in the United Provinces as a community of saints, fit for the second Israel, could

<sup>67</sup> J. J. Poelhekke, 'De vrede van Munster' in *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (ed. J. A. van Houtte *et al.*, 12 vol., Utrecht and Antwerp, 1949-58), VI, 390.

<sup>68</sup> J. G. van Dillen, 'De West-Indische Compagnie, het Calvinisme en de politiek', *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* LXXIV (1961), 145-72.

<sup>69</sup> Johannes Picardt, *Den Prediger. Dat is: Grondige verklaringe en bewys, genomen uyt Goddelycke, kerckelycke ende Prophane Schriften: van de Authoriteit, waerdicheyt en uynemetheyt des H. Predigh-Ampts: Boven alle hoogheden, Digniteyten en Officiën deser Werelt* (Zwolle, 1650).

not easily be reconciled with the view held by many regents that the official Church should comprehend the whole community and where there would be room, as in Noah's Ark, for both the 'clean' and the 'unclean'. Many ministers of the Word, who followed the golden mean, resigned themselves to this development. But the presence of a prophetic minority who fearlessly preached repentance and behaved as though they were the priest-kings of the Republic testifies to the vitality of the Calvinist concept of the Dutch Israel.

## 6. Contrasting and Converging Patterns: Relations between Church and State in Western Europe, 1660-1715

D. J. ROORDA

THE approach of Thomas Ken (1637-1711) and William Carstares (1644-1715) to relations between Church and State could hardly be more different: as such they furnish an apt introduction to the subject matter of this essay.

Before his appointment as bishop of Bath and Wells, Ken had been chaplain in The Hague to Mary, the wife of William III from 1679-80. During this period,<sup>1</sup> and also later on, this Anglican clergyman had occasionally been ill-used by 'Dutch William'.<sup>2</sup> In his passage through a life, whose spiritual depth makes it difficult for modern man properly to comprehend, Ken followed the dictates of his conscience, and he died, as he attested in his will, 'in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all papal and puritan innovations'.<sup>3</sup>

The Scotsman William Carstares was both a more straightforward Protestant and a far less saintly individual. Professor Haley once wrote about his 'long career of restless activity and intrigue'.<sup>4</sup> When an exile in the Dutch Republic he matriculated as a student of divinity in the University of Utrecht. He had a high opinion of Dutch intellectual life. When later asked for his advice on appointments to chairs of philosophy and divinity at Glasgow he pleaded for scholars from the United Provinces, arguing that 'good men are to be found there'.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> N. Japikse, *Prins Willem III, de stadhouder-koning* (2 vol., Amsterdam, 1930-3), II, 188.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Ken is now held in high esteem by the Dutch. Several of his hymns have recently been translated by W. Barnard for *Liedboek voor de kerken; psalmen en gezangen voor de eredienst* (The Hague and Leeuwarden, 1973), nos. 378 and 387. See also *Een compendium van achtergrondinformatie bij de 491 gezangen uit het Liedboek voor de kerken* (Amsterdam, 1977), col. 844 for an appreciation of Ken.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. Ken, Thomas.

<sup>4</sup> K. H. D. Haley, *William of Orange and the English Opposition, 1672-1674* (Oxford, 1953), p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. Carstares, William.

During a second period of exile he lived for some time at Leiden in one of the narrow streets close to the Pieterskerk.<sup>6</sup> Introduced by the Grand Pensionary Fagel to William, he became a devoted Orangist and as well as preaching the Word of God, he disseminated political pamphlets and took part in spying and plotting. His sojourns in the Netherlands were usually brief. But in England he was twice arrested and imprisoned, the first time being in 1674 when he agitated against Lauderdale, Charles II's minister and confidant for Scottish affairs.

As a result of the changes of 1689 Carstares emerged as an important figure in the Scottish Church, and he even managed to retain some of his influence during the reign of Anne. His nickname 'the cardinal' seems not inappropriate, especially when it is recalled that he was a pupil of Voetius, the professor who was derided as '*papa Ultrajectinus*'.<sup>7</sup> These nicknames acquire their piquancy because the Presbyterian Church, to which both men belonged, acknowledges no superiority of ministers.

Relations between Church and State were to cause problems to both men, though in different ways. Before 1688 Ken had to find an answer to the question how far he was in conscience bound to obey his lawful king. The theories of 'divine right' and 'passive obedience' first gave trouble when James II issued an order to the Anglican clergy on 4 May 1687, requiring them to read the Declaration of Indulgence on two successive Sundays in their churches. The choice between obedience and resistance could no longer be evaded. With six of his colleagues Ken found himself in the Tower but in June 1688 he was acquitted. When William came to the throne he was faced with a new dilemma. How far should he go in his disobedience against the new king whom he could not recognize as the legitimate ruler? Ken became a nonjuror. However he was neither prepared to countenance schism, nor to resume his dignity in Bath and Wells when given the opportunity in the reign of Anne.

In 1689, shortly before Ken had to step down, Carstares' star was in the ascendant. The Scottish Church, which for more than a century had known no fixed form of government, had reverted to episcopacy after 1660. But in William's reign Carstares helped to steer the Scottish Church towards a Presbyterian polity. He did so with a caution and moderation, which is apparently hard to reconcile with his impetuous character. It is not clear whether he accommodated to circum-

<sup>6</sup> *Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck, eerste graaf van Portland* (ed. N. Japikse, 5 vol. in 2 parts, The Hague, 1927-37), Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Kleine Serie 27, part II: ii, 757.

<sup>7</sup> A. C. Duker, *Gisbertus Voetius* (3 vol., Leiden, 1893-1914), III, 75-78; bijlagen I.

stances or to the King's wishes.<sup>8</sup> As a confidant of William III, as a moderator of the Church Assembly – or as the Dutch would say *praeses* of the synod – and, after 1707, also in his capacity as the representative of the Scottish Church in English government circles, he had to cope with many problems. After 1702 things became especially difficult for him, and in the new circumstances created by the Union of 1707 his position was still further weakened. Nevertheless, Carstares remained influential until his death.

When one compares the careers of these two churchmen one cannot but be struck by the fundamental differences separating them. Carstares introduced precisely those innovations Ken detested. And to the question Anglicans of his day considered crucial: 'who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?', Carstares, by his career, answered in a way they found quite unacceptable. Though contemporaries, these churchmen lived in different worlds, which had been moulded by past conflicts, echoes of which still lingered on into their own lifetime.

Ken's catholic convictions and his nostalgia for 'the whole church before the division of East and West'<sup>9</sup> would have been quite incomprehensible to Carstares. The Anglican bishop and those who shared his outlook sought always to remain in touch with the Orthodox Church of Eastern Europe and with the Gallican Church,<sup>10</sup> where papal authority was the subject of renewed controversy from 1682 to 1693. His interest in the early Church and Gallicanism is reflected in his library – the only part of his earthly possessions he did not sell when he resigned his bishopric – but books on Protestant theology were conspicuously absent.<sup>11</sup> Carstares on the other hand had collected not only works by De Bèze and other French Huguenots, but also many books written by Dutch divines, of whom some, such as Esse-  
nius, Leusden en Voetius, had been his teachers.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> A. I. Dunlop, *William Carstares and the Kirk by Law Established* (Edinburgh, 1967), pp. 63 ff. pleads for circumstances, whereas T. Maxwell, 'William III and the Scots Presbyterians' *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, XV (1963-5), 184 argues that the King's wishes were decisive.

<sup>9</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. Ken, Thomas.

<sup>10</sup> N. Sykes, *Church and State in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 18, 19

<sup>11</sup> Sykes, *Church and State*, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> R. H. Story, *William Carstares 1649-1715* (London, 1874), pp. 377-8.

## II

I should now explain why the utterly dissimilar standpoints of these two churchmen deserve our attention. Notwithstanding the variety of constitutions and church orders then found in Western Europe, relations between Church and State were often very close indeed: bishops sometimes appear to be primarily servants of the Crown in the provinces, while princes still considered that they should be concerned about the spiritual welfare of their subjects. Pierre Goubert, when writing about the position of the French Church in the *Ancien Régime*, uses such headings as '*l'état dans l'église*' and '*l'église dans l'état*' in order to emphasize the overlapping nature of their relations.<sup>13</sup> But among the European states of this time the Dutch Republic occupies in this respect, as in so many others, a unique position. In the Dutch case the relationship between the two spheres is altogether looser and different in character.

The church orders at this time divide naturally into two distinct categories. On the one hand there are the churches under episcopacy. In these a belief in the world as a divinely constituted order made for especially close relations between Church and State. In this church order bishops usually fulfilled tasks we would now consider political. And the prince, who was considered able to heal subjects afflicted with certain maladies by touching them,<sup>14</sup> may be regarded, to use Goubert's expression, as a *quasi-prêtre*.<sup>15</sup> The clergy, a hierarchy under the episcopate, formed an estate of the realm. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction, to which both the clergy and the laity were subject, was the crux of church discipline.

On the other extreme there are the non-episcopal churches ruled by presbyteries, where the laity participated as elders in the government of the church alongside the ministers. Here the State was far less closely involved in church discipline which was exercised by and within the local churches: the division between the two realms was already marked. The clergy were no longer considered as a separate order, and considerable uncertainty existed both about the civil consequences of ecclesiastical censure and about the legality and scope of the civil powers' authority in the Church. But any established Church was bound, by reason of that fact, to come into contact with the State. The spiritual and the secular realms may have been distinct, but they

<sup>13</sup> See P. Goubert, *L'ancien régime* (2 vol., Paris, 1969-73), II, 169-76; 177-9.

<sup>14</sup> Louis XIV touched with more devotion and conviction than William III. J. Klaits, *Printed Propaganda under Louis XIV. Absolute Monarchy and Public Opinion* (Princeton, 1976), pp. 24, 25; Japikse, *Prins Willem III*, II, 281.

<sup>15</sup> Goubert, *L'ancien régime*, II, 23.

could not be completely separated. Both served, to use the Scottish phrase 'if they be rightlie usit, to wit, to advance the glorie of God'.<sup>16</sup> The nature of the relationship with the State might have been considered irrelevant by the members of the Church; the interference of the State might have been resented and even considered unlawful; it was nonetheless inescapable. The ties were maintained by the representatives of the civil authority in the assemblies of the Church and by those who represented the Church in the State.

The differences between these two church orders were fundamental: in Scotland both Charles II and William III came to grief when they confused them.<sup>17</sup> It is idle to seek parallels between countries where an Episcopal church was established with those where a Presbyterian church enjoyed a privileged position. There is no sense in comparing the incomparable.<sup>18</sup> But some understanding may be gained of how Church and State relations developed in much of Western Europe if we confine our attention to two comparisons. Firstly, we can discover how the English experience compares in this respect with the French. To an extent this has already been done: Sykes in his classic work on Church and State in the eighteenth century, was clearly struck by the similarities between the English and French situations,<sup>19</sup> and in a recent work Ravitch has compared the episcopates of the two countries.<sup>20</sup> Secondly, parallels may be drawn between Church and State relations in Scotland after 1690 with those in the Dutch Republic. Longstanding ties between the two countries and the activities of a 'Scoto-Dutch junta'<sup>21</sup> in the 1690s might lead us to expect that in both countries relations between Church and State would be closely similar. It is therefore surprising that no serious attempt has yet been made to compare the position of the Presbyter-

<sup>16</sup> *A Compendium of the Laws of the Church of Scotland* (2nd. edn, 2 parts, Edinburgh, 1837-40), pt. I, 124.

<sup>17</sup> W. R. Foster, *Bishop and Presbytery: The Church of Scotland, 1661-1688* (London, 1958); T. Maxwell, 'The Church Union Attempt at the General Assembly of 1692' in *Reformation and Revolution. Essays presented to H. Watt* (ed. D. Shaw, Edinburgh, 1967), pp. 237-57.

<sup>18</sup> In particular the parallels drawn by H. A. Enno van Gelder are misleading, for which see his 'De nederlandse staten en het engels parlement in verzet tegen vorstenmacht en gevestigde kerk', *Mededelingen van de koninklijke Vlaamse academie voor wetenschappen, letteren en schone kunsten van België*, klasse der letteren, XXII (1960) nr. 5, reprinted in his *Van beeldenstorm tot pacificatie* (Amsterdam and Brussels, 1964), pp. 246-71 and also his *Getemperde vrijheid. Een verhandeling over de verhouding van Kerk en Staat in de Republiek... gedurende de zeventiende eeuw* (Groningen, 1972), esp. pp. 46-9.

<sup>19</sup> Sykes, *Church and State*, pp. 18, 50, 89,.

<sup>20</sup> N. Ravitch, *Sword and Mitre. Government and Episcopate in France and England in the Age of Aristocracy* (The Hague and Paris, 1966).

<sup>21</sup> Maxwell, 'William III and the Scots Presbyterians', 133.

ian Churches of Scotland and the Dutch Republic. But besides the resemblances we shall observe between England and France, and between Scotland and the Dutch Republic, we shall also have to take account of so many diversities between the constitutions and the churches of these countries, that we shall find ourselves giving more attention to the differences than to similarities.

### III

When we compare the episcopates of the two countries, one is immediately struck by the small number of English bishops – 27 in all – whereas the French Church had no fewer than 130 bishops. Nor were the English bishops as well provided: there were no rich abbeys to strengthen ties between the bishops and the Crown, nor were the English bishops assisted in the discharge of their episcopal functions by coadjutors in their old age. Secondly, whereas in England between one-third and two-fifths of the episcopate was of gentle birth, in France eight or nine in every ten bishops could claim noble descent.<sup>22</sup> These differences in recruitment also help to explain the dissimilar course of the bishop's career in the two countries. At the moment of his appointment the average English bishop, who would have climbed up the ladder of preferment slowly, was some ten or fifteen years older than his French counterpart.<sup>23</sup> In France it was only the very small group of *roturiers* who were doomed to climb slowly. If a non-noble clergyman succeeded in becoming a bishop, he was invariably given one of the insignificant *évêchés crottés* in the south or in Brittany. Such bishops had little chance of acquiring more lucrative sees later in life.

In both countries bishops were appointed by the Crown, which is not to say that the bishops only owed their mitres to the king: a cleric who failed to attract the attention of those in the king's entourage stood little chance of obtaining a bishopric. Once appointed, the bishops remained firmly under royal control. Usually they were compliant enough to the royal will, dutifully carrying out those tasks expected of them by the state. For example, the bishops were called on to discover public opinion in their dioceses and to make known their findings to the authorities. And from the pulpit they would also frequently defend the honour of the king and the policy of the

<sup>22</sup> Ravitch, *Sword and Mitre*, pp. 69, 70, 120, 121.

<sup>23</sup> Ravitch, however, did not consider this aspect. My statement is based on data collected by A. P. G. de Beer and J. Nauta.

government. A bishop who kicked over the traces knew that he would never be appointed to a better see.

In England the King and the bishops after 1660 were forced more closely together than ever before. Yet, compared to Louis XIV, Charles II's influence over his bishops was slight. The Church of the Restoration, though devoted to the king's person, was more dependent upon Parliament than its predecessor.<sup>24</sup> This dependency was one reason why the English bishops remained so closely in touch with the political life of the nation; moreover many of the important political issues of the day vitally affected the Church.

Because of these very circumstances episcopacy in England developed quite differently from France. A political conflict over appointments, such as occurred in England in 1707, was inconceivable in France. Queen Anne may indeed have been the last monarch to make episcopal appointments on her own. Thereafter the need of the government for support from the episcopal bench in the House of Lords was considered more important than the personal whim of the monarch.<sup>25</sup> Within living memory the episcopates of the two countries had behaved quite differently. French bishops were closely concerned with the business of court and state. Almost without exception they supported the crown's policy towards the Church in all its changes. For its part, the French Crown tended to treat ecclesiastical problems, irrespective of whether these concerned the Holy See, the Jansenists or the Huguenots, as though these were the work of hostile foreign powers. In England by contrast the most sensitive issues concerning the Church arose from within and were treated accordingly. Differences of opinion among the English bishops became increasingly acute because the episcopate was caught up in the deepening political crisis that affected the whole nation. Divisions within the Church were accentuated since each generation of bishops reflected the political convictions that had prevailed at the time of its appointment. This politicizing of the English episcopate was also assisted by the fact that it mirrored to a far greater degree than its French counterpart, the social fabric of the nation.<sup>26</sup>

These differences in the social position of the episcopates should be kept in mind when we examine to what extent the clergy of the Church succeeded in presenting a united front in this period. The parochial clergy, recruited from lower layers of society, were not always pre-

<sup>24</sup> 'The restored Church... was just as firmly tied to Parliament as the pre-1640 Church had been tied to the king', J. P. Kenyon *Times Literary Supplement*, 30 June 1978 no. 3978, p. 747.

<sup>25</sup> Ravitch, *Sword and Mitre*, p. 117.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

pared to follow the lead of the nobly-born prelates. In times of social and political tension the French lower clergy, who were relatively heavily taxed by their superiors, could not always be controlled. The English lower clergy, especially, felt lost after the Revolution of 1689. It is then not surprising that the demand for the recall of Convocation came from this section of the clergy, who were driven on by a longstanding sense of grievance. And, when this Church assembly came to sit again, this unruly element dominated the lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury by its obstructionist tactics and political partisanship<sup>27</sup> until the assembly was finally suspended in 1717, not to be revived until the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup>

The disappearance of this institution may have had unfortunate consequences for the lower clergy who were thereby deprived of an opportunity to make known the wishes and grievances of the Church. But this assembly unlike the assembly of the French Church, met in its final phase only fitfully and functioned very poorly. Convocation was, towards its end, very far from being a separate parliament for spiritual affairs, and it was overshadowed by its secular counterpart at Westminster.

One may well ask whether Convocation may be considered in the same way as the General Assembly of the French clergy. Though Ravitch believes that there are close resemblances, he is not unaware of the differences.<sup>29</sup> Of course both these clerical assemblies met solely at the monarch's pleasure.<sup>30</sup> But the *Assemblée générale du clergé* outlived Convocation by more than 150 years. This raises the question why the French king should have continued to convoke the *Assemblée* when Convocation had ceased to meet. The French assembly had an entirely different composition from that of the Anglican Convocation. The 'French'<sup>31</sup> clergy represented 116 bishoprics and sat together; they made up the *premier ordre* of the episcopate and a *deuxième ordre* from which the parish clergy had been excluded since 1680. In the Anglican Convocation of Canterbury, on the other hand, an upper house of 22

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.

<sup>28</sup> An account of Convocation in this period until its suspension in 1717 is given by G. V. Bennett, *The Tory Crisis in Church and State 1688-1730. The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester* (Oxford, 1975). Ravitch's *Sword and Mitre* is not mentioned in Bennett's bibliography.

<sup>29</sup> Ravitch, *Sword and Mitre*, p. 195.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>31</sup> The *clergé étranger*, that is the clergy and 19 bishops of the archdioceses of Cambrai and Besançon, were not represented in the *Assemblée*.

bishops was confronted by a lower house in which the grievances of the lower clergy could find an outlet.<sup>32</sup>

The French Crown, as eager to tax the clergy as any member of the third estate, was confronted by an assembly for which it was a matter of principle that the property of the Church should remain exempt from taxation by the State. The clergy, moreover, saw the assembly as the very place where their standing and identity as an estate of the realm could manifest themselves. The wealth and solvency of the Church naturally attracted the envy of the Crown, but the *Assemblée* bought royal goodwill by consenting to a modest, yet highly welcome *Don Gratuit*, every five years. As a consequence this obliging body was allowed to survive until the end of the *Ancien Régime*. Indeed as an institution the *Assemblée* flourished: its bureaucracy proliferated, it continued to present the clergy's *remonstrances* to the Crown, and its representatives in the royal government between sessions, the *Agents Généraux*, usually received after a stint of five years a bishopric as a reward.

This survival of the *Assemblée* is surprising. Under the absolute monarchy the French clergy was indeed the only *ordre* to retain its own representative institutions at the national level. But if the constitutional position of the French clergy remained more or less unchanged, the same could not be said of their counterparts in England. As long ago as 1664 the English Church had given up the possibility of taxing itself, when a private agreement to this end had been drafted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Clarendon. This agreement was accepted without much discussion.<sup>33</sup> The Cavalier Parliament may have been more royalist and pro-Anglican than its predecessors, but it made no protest when the last source of money from the Church to the Crown was stopped. When the Bishop of Lichfield advised the Archbishop on the agreement reached in 1664 he stated that in his opinion the clergy stood to lose more by retaining than by surrendering, their privileged position. In truth, the English clergy exchanged the possibility of being assessed more heavily as a corporation in the hope of paying less when taxed along with the King's other subjects. Probably this bishop did not realize that the clergy by the same token, also forfeited their identity as separate estate of the realm, for it soon became evident that the Crown had no desire to summon an assembly

<sup>32</sup> The Convocation of York, which was unimportant during this period, had a quite different composition.

<sup>33</sup> Ravitch, *Sword and Mitre*, pp. 102 ff. furnishes some information about this agreement. He mentions the interesting footnote by Speaker Onslow in *Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Time* (ed. M. J. Routh, 2 edn., 6 vol., Oxford, 1833), IV, 520, 521.

from which it could expect no profit. The French bishops were certainly determined not to follow their English compeers into political obscurity. Nevertheless the historian may still conclude that the English bishops, who attained their episcopal dignity at a significantly riper age than their counterparts in France, had made the wiser choice.

#### IV

In countries where Presbyterian churches enjoyed a privileged position a quite different set of problems occurred. The government of the Presbyterian church was exercised through *kerkeraden* (kirk sessions) of which ministers and lay-elders were members, and through the superior courts - the *classis* (presbytery) and the provincial synods. To these last the local churches sent their representatives. In Scotland we also find the General Assembly of the Kirk:<sup>34</sup> in the Dutch Republic there existed too, at least in theory, a national Synod but it did not assemble at this time. These assemblies were supposed to be 'the only government of Christ's Church'<sup>35</sup> in each country. Individual members of these assemblies, servants of their churches, were forbidden to exercise superiority over others. In accordance with this theory, the Scottish Church had already decided in the second half of the sixteenth century that the surviving bishops and superintendents should have no more say in the Church than other ministers of the Word. Their authority was said to reside in a mandate they held from the General Assembly. But when a proper episcopate was reinstated in Scotland in the early seventeenth century, Voetius, the professor at Utrecht, thought it necessary to warn his compatriots against this bad example: 'cautiores uti spero nos reddet exemplum Scotiae...'<sup>36</sup> Prelacy had survived in the Scottish Church, in the view of Voetius, because of half-hearted decisions. To prevent any revival of prelacy in the Dutch, Voetius insisted that whenever ecclesiastical authority was delegated, it should be carefully circumscribed and curtailed. The highest church court could leave certain matters to be resolved by delegates in the intervals between meetings. In the Dutch Republic such delegates were called *deputaten*, deputies of the Synod, and the Scottish Presbyterians had their Commission of Assembly. These were only empowered to settle *ad hoc*-orders given by the assembly, orders which they always had to report to the next meeting. These rules were

<sup>34</sup> S. Mechie, *The Office of Lord High Commissioner* (Edinburgh, 1957), p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> Cited by Mechie, *Ibid.*, p. 20 from *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, IX, 133.

<sup>36</sup> Cited by H. C. Rutgers, *Kerkelijke deputaten* (Kampen, 1910) p. 184 Gisbertus Voetius, *Politica ecclesiastica* (3 parts in 4 vol., Amsterdam, 1663-76), I, 114.

strictly observed by both the Kirk of Scotland and the Dutch Reformed Church. Such regulations made it difficult for the Church to respond promptly to unforeseen occurrences yet as late as 1910, they were still being defended as principles of fundamental and lasting validity.<sup>37</sup>

If required by the assembly, the Dutch deputies and the Scottish commissioners would go to meet the representatives of the State. At the same time the Scottish Royal Commissioner or Lord High Commissioner and his Dutch counterpart, the *commissaris politiek ter synode* or political commissioner to the synod,<sup>38</sup> would act on behalf of the civil powers in the assemblies of the Church. Such relations were always a matter of concern, even suspicion, on the part of the church's zealots, who were sometimes guilty of inconsistency on the score of the State's supervision of church affairs. The sovereign's commissioners might be called 'nourishers of the kirk',<sup>39</sup> or '*voedsterheren van de kerk*', but some of the members took exception to the erastian fare they presented. The presence of such commissioners was not considered strictly necessary and the commissioners were only permitted an advisory vote in the assembly, on the ground that they were not proper representatives of the Church. In this respect ecclesiastical theory was clearly at odds with the practice of the age.

But there were important differences between the practice in the two countries: the Royal Commissioner was for example confronted by a much more numerous assembly than his Dutch counterpart. The first Scottish Church Assembly held after 1690 was attended by more than 200 representatives from all over the country. In the Dutch Republic the Synod of Dordrecht (1618-9) was the last truly national assembly. Provincial synods were, however, regularly held, and the province of Holland was divided into two regional assemblies, Noord- and Zuid-Holland. To the synod of South Holland<sup>40</sup> no more than 44 representatives ever came, with, in addition, some advisers. These included the 'correspondents' sent by other provincial synods. By their presence they symbolized the unity of the Church, which had been guaranteed by the *Grote Vergadering* (Great Assembly) of 1651. In Scotland as well as in the Netherlands, the assembly usually sat once a year for up to ten days. And, during the opening and concluding ceremonies the representatives of the Sovereign's authority (i. e. the

<sup>37</sup> Rutgers, *Kerkelijke deputaten*, p. 184.

<sup>38</sup> The Eglises wallonnes in the Dutch Republic held national synods to which no political commissioners came.

<sup>39</sup> *Compendium of the Laws of the Church of Scotland*, I, 139.

<sup>40</sup> The synodal *acta* for Zuid-Holland are best known because they have been published, see *Acta der particuliere synoden van Zuid-Holland, 1621-1700* (ed. W. P. C. Knuttel, 6 vol., The Hague, 1908-16), Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Kleine Serie, 3, 5, 8, 11, 15, 16.

Crown in Scotland and the provincial estates of each of the seven United Provinces) were treated with due deference and ceremony.

In order to discover more precisely where in the synods the balance of power lay between Church and State, we need to look beyond the numbers present and the formal courtesies to the abilities and standing of those who were there. The Scottish peer who acted for a few years as the Royal Commissioner<sup>41</sup> certainly commanded respect by virtue of his noble birth. But his counterpart in Holland, the representative of the sovereign provincial States,<sup>42</sup> was invariably a member of one of the provincial courts of justice. Moreover he usually served on the synod twice as long as his Scottish colleague.<sup>43</sup> And the importance of these Dutch political commissioners should not be underestimated: of the fifteen Hollanders who served during this period no fewer than five were closely related to one of the Grand Pensionaries of the province.<sup>44</sup>

Nor, on the other hand, should the representatives of the churches at the assemblies be dismissed as people of little consequence. Both churches would select men of high calibre. Though details on the Scottish representatives are rather scanty, we know that their ministers, at least, would have been university graduates, while in the Republic the elders were also men of standing. In both countries the principle that there should be as many elders as ministers was not upheld in practice. In the synod of South Holland elders, in fact, only accounted for a quarter of all the delegates, a rather smaller proportion than was usual in the Scottish assemblies. But every lay-member in attendance at the synods of South Holland was a regent from one of the towns of the province; in addition, many ministers were related to this same ruling class of the province.<sup>45</sup> There were, moreover, always a sprinkling of fairly experienced ministers: for example those who had once been members of the synod's board often reappeared after a time, and such ministers were regularly chosen as deputies of the synod. So

<sup>41</sup> Mechie, *Office of Lord High Commissioner*.

<sup>42</sup> The two synods in Holland were always attended by at least two commissioners. However the representative of the sovereign provincial States was far more important than the other commissioner, who would be a burgomaster of the town where the synod was meeting. When the synod met in a town belonging to the prince of Orange an additional commissioner might attend, but his authority was relatively slight. The States' representative was influential on two counts: he paid the expenses at the conclusion of the meeting and he was entitled to intervene in the deliberations of the synod.

<sup>43</sup> Between 1690 and 1715 eight Scottish Royal Commissioners attended 24 assemblies, whereas fifteen commissioners of the States attended no fewer than 112 synods in North and South Holland between 1660 and 1715.

<sup>44</sup> Much data about these men has been collected by J. Sikkema.

<sup>45</sup> G. Groenhuis, *De predikanten. De sociale positie van de gereformeerde predikanten in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden ± 1700* (Groningen, 1977), pp.133 ff.

the cumulative experience of such ministers certainly outweighed that of the commissioner or representative of the sovereign provincial States.

In the Dutch Republic as in Scotland the commissioner had extensive powers. In the last resort he could veto the proceedings of the assembly if he thought that the Church was about to encroach upon the competence of the State. But the rules of the game, accepted by both parties, however, ensured that this authority was only rarely used. So where did the boundaries lie? And were these boundaries sufficiently clearly defined and generally accepted as to ensure that conflicts were kept to a minimum?

Long before 1690, of course, relations between the Church and the civil authorities in the Dutch Republic had settled into a convenient routine, whereas the Scots still had to learn how to play the game according to the rules. In Scotland, moreover, the authority of both the civil powers and that of the Church newly established by law remained in doubt for some time after 1690. Two groups of believers would have nothing to do with the Presbyterian Church. On the one hand there were those convinced anti-erastians, the Cameronians; and at the opposite extreme the Jacobites who were quite prepared to accept an erastian settlement provided it were imposed by James VII on an episcopalian church. But when the newly established Presbyterian Church wanted to persecute Episcopalians because of their religious beliefs the Crown intervened.<sup>46</sup> William III feared there would be repercussions in his southern kingdom, where his policy of toleration was only very slowly gaining acceptance. But if the Assembly of the Kirk did not yet appreciate the King's problems, the same was also true in reverse. The government did not appear to understand that by intervening in this way in the affairs of the Church it gave encouragement to the anti-erastians both within the Church and outside and thereby put the new religious settlement in Scotland in jeopardy.

Certainly William III did not appreciate that the Crown in Scotland was entirely dependent on the support of the Presbyterians. In his uneasy alliance the King tried, on several occasions, to play the Episcopalians and Presbyterians off against each other. But he had to

<sup>46</sup> These persecutions began in the winter of 1688-9, when no decision about the future government of the Scottish Church had yet been taken. They were still continuing three years later. For a lively, though not impartial, description of these later persecutions see letter of John Campbell, Earl of Breadalbane to Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham, 5 November 1691 in *Manuscripts of the Late Allan George Finch* (ed. S. C. Lomas and F. Bickley, 4 vol., London, 1913-65), Historical Manuscripts Commission, 71, III, 297-8.

give way eventually to circumstances which greatly favoured Presbyterianism.<sup>47</sup>

Such strains were only to be expected; they were not insoluble. In part they may be attributed to the novelty of the religious settlement in Scotland. The persecutions the Presbyterians had suffered in the pre-revolutionary era had left a legacy of bitterness and suspicion, which did not immediately disappear in 1690. And the King had to rely on his experienced commissioner to see that the Assembly pursued the policy of the Crown. Eventually both parties grew accustomed to the new situation. As the Kirk grew more assured, it became less intransigent. Indeed the Church came to the assistance of the Crown in times of political crisis in Scotland.<sup>48</sup> The Crown in fact allowed the Kirk's influence to expand so that it came to enjoy an authority unknown to the Reformed Church in the Dutch Republic.

The Scottish universities were incorporated into governing courts of the Church.<sup>50</sup> Secular patronage of ministers of the Church had been abolished from 1690 and even after 1712, when it was restored, the Scottish Church was far less hampered than the Dutch Church by the rights of patrons. In the Dutch Republic all attempts to abolish secular patronage in this period were unavailing.<sup>51</sup> The Kirk also had to its credit other achievements which clearly show it was now acting as a national Church. The first was the Barrier Act, which obliged Church courts at all levels to express their opinion on the measures drafted by the General Assembly. Such a regulation helps to overcome a weakness in Presbyterianism which often runs the risk of being crippled by differing local and regional convictions. Secondly the Kirk set out to evangelize with the support of the government the Highlands, where as late as the early 1690s the Presbyterians exerted virtually no influence.

Both these developments have no parallel in the history of

<sup>47</sup> The articles of T. Maxwell 'William III and the Scots Presbyterians' and 'The Church Union Attempt' greatly enlighten us about the position of the Scottish Church in the 1690s. I do not altogether share the author's opinions about the convictions of William III: to my mind, these were based on a desire for toleration rather than indifference.

<sup>48</sup> Mechie, *Office of Lord High Commissioner*, p. 31.

<sup>49</sup> After 1710 the situation became less favourable for the Kirk. For this change see my remarks below, p. 152.

<sup>50</sup> The *Acta* clearly show that the professors of theology at Leiden University only attended the synod when it met in the town and then only as non-voting members. See also J. J. van Toorenenbergen, *Hoe een deel van de Dordtse nalatenschap verzaakt werd* (Rotterdam, 1879).

<sup>51</sup> The information to be found in J. H. S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (3 edn., Oxford, 1973), pp. 278 ff. may be compared with that furnished by Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid*, pp. 25 ff. and esp. 28.

Dutch Church. Not that the opportunities were lacking in the Republic. For example the Reformed Church of Holland together with the other provincial churches, might have undertaken missionary or pastoral work in the lands of the Generality governed by the States General, or in the territories controlled by the Army in the Southern Netherlands and especially the Barrier towns. For political reasons the civil authorities in the Dutch Republic could never feel much enthusiasm for such missionary work. Nonetheless an explanation for the lethargy of the Reformed Church should also be sought in the nature of relations between Church and State as these had developed in the United Provinces in the late seventeenth century.

Since the early part of that century the political commissioners who went to the synods of Holland were instructed that they were not to allow debates of a political character or discussion of matters concerning the Dutch provinces and churches in general.<sup>52</sup> So the only subjects left for consideration in a provincial synod of Holland were those of the immediate interest to the churches of that province. Even when the *Grote Vergadering* (Great Assembly) resolved in 1651 that the Reformed Church should be maintained throughout the United Provinces, the State of Holland saw no need to change this restrictive instruction because the text of this resolution merely stated that the provinces would maintain the Reformed Church 'each in its own territory'.

We do not know how precisely the commissioners executed this part of their instruction. Since the *Acta* of the synod only contain the resolutions they give little information about the activities of the commissioners, and virtually nothing about subjects of the agenda on which they prevented discussion. From other sources, however, we know<sup>53</sup> that the commissioners took a more active part than might be supposed from reading the *Acta*. It is clear they repeatedly and effectively intervened, whenever it seemed the Church might overstep the limits of its competence. The commissioners were also ready to interrupt the proceedings when correspondents from other synods tried to raise subjects of a non-provincial character, when deputies of the synod made approaches to the political authorities in the other

<sup>52</sup> The instruction concludes as follows: those in attendance at the synod may not discuss 'anything which touches the policy of the provinces or churches in general, but only matters relating to the provincial churches'.

<sup>53</sup> See J. N. Bakhuizen van den Brink, 'Mr. H. van Hees als commissaris-politiek' in *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, XXXVI (1948) 148-92 and *idem* 'Mr. A. Slicher als commissaris-politiek', *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* XXXVII (1950), 193-250. Both these eighteenth-century commissioners kept private minutes.

provinces, and when the deputies of the different synods showed any signs of wishing to consult together.<sup>54</sup>

Of course the members of the synod were also familiar with the doctrine of provincial sovereignty: no matter what they might say, they would eventually defer to this doctrine. Whenever they cooperated with the other provincial churches, they behaved as though they knew that such initiatives might be judged unconstitutional. The commissioners therefore had no difficulty in enforcing what was the cornerstone of the Republic's constitution. It would therefore be quite wrong to suppose the commissioners deliberately harboured malicious designs to keep the Church divided and dependent on the State. Nevertheless the instructions were often enforced without regard for the damage they did to the legitimate interests of the Church. Whenever the Church did oppose the commissioners its policy was neither very firm nor very imaginative. And when in 1713 Church and State met to consider the activities of the Reformed Church in the Barrier towns, these discussions were not held in the synod, as one might have expected, but in another forum.<sup>55</sup> This may be taken as indicative of the limited scope of the ordinary synods.

The synods are often criticized for their ineffective campaigns against *paapse stoutigheden* (popish insolences) and their opposition to the lax policy adopted by the political authority to the various Protestant sects. But such narrow-mindedness on the part of the synods may in part be ascribed to the rigid enforcement of the doctrine of provincial sovereignty which denied the Church the necessary scope to take a more active part in missionary work.

## V

The relationship between Church and State was also affected by the relative strength of dissenting churches. If the adherents of such groups were sufficiently numerous and the political authorities did not consider them to be a threat to the State, the government might be prepared to make concessions. This was the case in the Dutch Republic, where dissident Protestants had been treated leniently ever since the

<sup>54</sup> Rutgers, *Kerkelijke deputaten*, pp. 74 ff.

<sup>55</sup> On the occasion of the *visie der autographa*, a meeting held every three years at which were present church officials from all the provinces, including the Walloon Churches, as well as deputies from the States General. The ostensible purpose was to examine the Acta of the Synod of Dordrecht (1618-9) and the papers concerning the translation of the Bible (Statenvertaling).

Reformation. In the late seventeenth century the treatment of Roman Catholics unexpectedly improved. Though the attitude of the Catholic leaders towards the Republic had been suspect during the 1670s,<sup>56</sup> the political authorities in the United Provinces had ceased to regard them as a serious threat by 1700.<sup>57</sup> When therefore the secular authorities were asked by the Reformed Church to deal more harshly with minorities it is easy to understand why these repeatedly refused.

In Scotland on the contrary the situation after 1690 was quite different. Non-juring episcopalians were considered politically untrustworthy. On the other hand the jurors among them were not regarded as threat. They might indeed in time join the established Church. Whereas in France the savage repression of the Huguenots was the policy of the state, the English government only hesitantly embarked on a policy of religious toleration. Unlike the Dutch Republic dissenting groups were not numerous.<sup>58</sup> Another difficulty which prevented England from boldly allowing religious freedom was that Comprehension and Indulgence were rightly considered as mutually exclusive, rather than complementary, solutions to the problem.<sup>59</sup> When proposals for comprehension failed, a modest degree of toleration effectively put an end to the control and coercion exercised by the established Church. The church courts lost their hold on the laity, and the clergy felt a sense of impotent frustration.<sup>60</sup> After 1690 the clergymen armed with their Tory convictions, therefore campaigned against both the occasional conformity of dissenters and their flourishing academies.

In France the position of the church courts was also weakened. The Crown, believing itself hampered by the Church's jurisdiction, severely curtailed the activities of these courts. Such changes foster the impression that the Church in France was becoming more dependent on the secular arm. Relations between Church and State now settled into a familiar pattern which was respected by both sides. The State, however, only accepted the arrangement as long as everything in the Church remained orderly and peaceful.

<sup>56</sup> For example Jan van Neercassel, the apostolic-vicar, openly invited Louis XIV to establish his authority in the United Provinces in 1672, see M. G. Spiertz, *L'église catholique des Provinces-Unies et le Saint-Siège pendant la deuxième moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Leuven, 1975), pp. 115 ff. and 160-2.

<sup>57</sup> Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid*, p. 134.

<sup>58</sup> According to M. R. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford, 1978), p. 270 the Dissenters made up about 6 per cent and according to J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (Harmondsworth, 1974), p. 270 the Catholics about 5 per cent in the late seventeenth century.

<sup>59</sup> Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State*, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> Bennett, *Ibid.*, pp. 11-15.

Yet it would perhaps be premature to suppose that the process of secularization, evident in the sixteenth century, had begun again and that the Church was becoming irrelevant to the State. Secularization is a concept that defies easy definition. It embraces not only a shift of functions or matters from the spiritual to the secular realm, but also all the consequences that follow from the disintegration of universalist convictions. In fact a reaction against secularization can be discerned in the early part of the seventeenth century.<sup>61</sup> We should not draw too sweeping conclusions, even where the State was gaining ground at the expense of the Church, for the gospel could still be successfully propagated. Towards the close of the period under review both the Gallican and the Anglican churches became more active in the fields of education and charity. The Anglican leaders, who stimulated this work, realized that their Church would in the near future probably receive less support from the State than it had done before.<sup>62</sup> In France the State may even have been of some indirect help to the Church, for example when it passed the regulations of 1695 which enabled the episcopate to control the lower clergy more effectively.<sup>63</sup> But the State's influence was probably less important in promoting the Church's role in society than the devotion of all its members.

The success of such activity depended on the prevailing climate of thought in Europe. The importance of this elusive factor counted for more than the institutional framework within which the churches continued to operate. With *la crise de la conscience européenne* the climate became less favourable for the established churches. Many divines adopted a latitudinarian stance and the enthusiasm for persecuting minorities abated. Before 1715 the State had begun to come to terms with dissenters, and this often required new approaches.

In England Political Associations operated with some success as pressuregroups during the last decades of our period.<sup>64</sup> The Quakers, with their 'Meeting for Sufferings', were the first to lobby M.P.'s and members of the government. At stake was a more favourable interpretation of the modest rights obtained in 1689. The 'Dissenting Deputies' of the Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists soon followed and they increased their activities when the Schism Act of 1714 attacked their schools.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>61</sup> W. J. Bouwsma, 'The Secularization of Society in the Seventeenth Century' *XIII International Congress of Historical Sciences. Moscow 1970* (Moscow, 1973) pp. 90-105.

<sup>62</sup> Bennett, *Tory Crisis in Church and State*, pp. 20-2.

<sup>63</sup> Goubert, *L'ancien régime*, II, 181-2.

<sup>64</sup> N. C. Hunt, *Two Early Political Associations, The Quakers and the Dissenting Deputies in the Age of Sir Robert Walpole* (Oxford, 1961).

<sup>65</sup> Watts, *The Dissenters*, pp. 266-7.

The Unions of 1707 had given guarantees to the Scottish Church, but nevertheless its position too had become less secure. With a new Tory Administration even Carstares could not after 1710 prevent the recognition being given to a 'juring Episcopal Church' which used the English liturgy. This, it has been pointed out was 'a first step in the long process of disestablishing the Kirk by law established since the law now recognized two churches'.<sup>66</sup>

Often the foreigners who praised the achievements of the Dutch Republic gave too favourable an impression of the position of those inhabitants who did not belong to the Reformed Church.<sup>67</sup> Of the four officially established churches the Dutch Reformed Church was, indeed, the least privileged. But in practice the toleration of dissent in the Republic was organized in a very impractical way. Everyone was free to follow his convictions and no attempt was ever made to enforce church uniformity. But the law did not formally allow dissenters to worship as they pleased. So the position of dissenters who wished to hold their own services largely depended upon informal arrangements at local level.<sup>68</sup> There were then many opportunities for officials to abuse their powers and exact bribes from religious dissidents. It is well-known how much Catholics had to pay in some towns and villages to local officials for the connivance of their clandestine meetings. It is then all the more surprising to discover that before 1715 the States entered into important informal contacts with the Catholics at national level. The preliminaries to the so-called 'Utrecht Schism' were the immediate cause. This schism in Dutch Catholicism, which did not formally come into existence until the early 1720s, had been in prospect since 1702, when the Archbishop and apostolic vicar, Codde, had been suspended by the Holy See.<sup>69</sup> Some of the secular clergy, influenced by Jansenism, were confronted by a more ultramontane group of clergymen, among whom many regulars. When the ambassadors of certain Catholic powers, accredited to the States General, gave their support to this group, their opponents, claiming that the ancient rights of the Dutch Catholic Church were

<sup>66</sup> Dunlop, *William Carstares*, p. 134.

<sup>67</sup> Sir William Temple was incorrect in suggesting that formal regulations of general validity existed which allowed them to worship (Sir William Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, ed. G. N. Clark, Oxford, 1972, pp. 104-5).

<sup>68</sup> Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid*, p. 74-5.

<sup>69</sup> About this conflict a thesis has recently appeared by A. H. M. van Schaik, *Bataafs en rooms; drie studies over de verhouding van de katholieke kerk in de noordelijke Nederlanden en Rome aan het eind van de zeventiende en het begin van de achttiende eeuw* (Utrecht, 1979).

endangered, appealed to the States. The States had many reasons for taking the side of the appellants in this conflict. They were prepared to take measures against the regulars, especially the Jesuits, and they used their so-called 'right' to determine who should succeed Codde. The party that had asked for the intervention of the States did not in any way contest this right.

So the Presbyterian authorities in the Dutch Republic eventually became involved in a dispute concerning which Catholic bishop should reside in the United Provinces. But perhaps this development was not as extraordinary as it might at first appear. Was not life in England at the same time made more tolerable for people of Carstares' conviction and Scotland for those of Ken's outlook?

## 7. The Authority of the Dutch State over the Churches, 1795-1853

J. A. BORNEWASSER

THE political revolution of 1795, which marked the demise of the old Republic of the Seven Provinces and the beginning of the new Batavian Republic, fundamentally changed relations between the State and the various Churches. The idea of the privileged Church – frequently referred to in revolutionary rhetoric as the *heerschende* (ruling) Church – was relinquished, when that debilitated ‘seven-headed monster of the State’, as the Republic of the Seven Provinces was sometimes called, disappeared.

### I

Throughout the old Republic the Reformed Church had been linked to the State authority in numerous ways,<sup>1</sup> though it never could become an Established Church (in the English sense), if only because it accepted the doctrine of provincial sovereignty and therefore never developed a nationwide organization. Moreover, its relationship with the local and provincial authorities and with the States General, was intrinsically different from that prevailing in most other Protestant countries, which were a great deal less tolerant. Individuals were not compelled by law to become members of its community or take part in its acts of worship; nor were its ministers servants of the State. Contrary to the wishes of the orthodox majority in the Church, the secular authorities usually refused to give legal force to the practice that only members of the Reformed Church, as regents or officials, could hold government posts at different levels.

But as the only ‘public’ Church, the Reformed Church was indeed

<sup>1</sup> For a summary see H. A. Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid. Een verhandeling over de verhouding van Kerk en Staat in de Republiek... gedurende de zeventiende eeuw* (Groningen, 1972).

privileged, being supported in a variety of ways by the sovereign provinces. Financial support for its ministers and church buildings was provided either directly by the government, or from revenue derived from the property of the medieval Church, which had been administered by the secular authorities since the Reformation. Adequate funds were also made available for the care of its poor and the expenses of its provincial synods were met by the provinces. The presence, too, of the *commissarissen politiek* as the representatives of the civil authorities were known, gave these meetings an official character. The monopoly of the Reformed Church in education ensured that in the public schools a strictly Calvinist spirit prevailed. By enforcing the observance of the Sabbath, by prohibiting fairs, plays, dancing and so on, and by proclaiming days of prayer and repentance, the secular authorities endorsed what was dear to the Church. On the other hand, the Reformed Church was allowed only a limited amount of freedom: for its privileges, the Reformed Church had to accept a degree of State interference. Ministers were often imposed upon a local church by the magistrates and in the appointment of elders and deacons, the congregation had also to take into account the wishes of the town councils. Preachers who dared to criticize the official tolerance shown towards latitudinarians and dissenters were promptly reprimanded. The *commissarissen politiek* were prepared to curb the freedom of the Church as readily as they were to bring to the attention of the States the religious demands of the leaders of the Church.

For that reason, though the Dutch Republic did not recognize an Established Church as such, the 'true Christian Reformed Religion' as defined in 1619 at the National Synod at Dordrecht (the only one ever held!), may properly be considered as the official religion of the State. During the *Grote Vergadering*, an extraordinary assembly of the States General held in 1651, the seven united yet sovereign provinces invested even their confederation of states with a Reformed character. The famous Union of Utrecht, which since 1579 had served as a constitution, had originally given each province freedom in religious affairs; yet, some seventy years later, they promised each other to uphold the one and only Faith 'by means of the Might of the Land'.<sup>2</sup>

In practice, each province, like the towns and rural communities, continued to pursue its own religious policy, the one more tolerant than the other. For this reason it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that, with regard to the Republic, one cannot really speak of *the* State,

<sup>2</sup> J. T. de Visser, *Kerk en Staat* (3 vol., Leiden, 1926-7), II, 279, 288; cf. O. J. de Jong, 'Unie en religie' in *De Unie van Utrecht. Wording en werking van een verbond en een verbondsacte* (ed. S. Groenvelt and H. L. P. Leeuwenberg, The Hague, 1979), pp. 177-80.

but rather of a collection of separate entities operating with public authority. So the religious policy adopted in Friesland, for example, was quite different from that followed in Holland, both in its commitment to the Reformed Faith and in its treatment of the officially proscribed groups of dissenters. The tolerance of the authorities, so highly praised abroad, is evident from the fact that the small Protestant Churches such as the Mennonites, the Remonstrants, and the Lutherans, and the dissident sects of the Socinians, Quakers, Collegiants, and also later the Moravian Brethren, succeeded in leading a tolerable existence. Even the Catholics who, in the eyes of orthodox Calvinists, were guilty of 'accursed idolatry', survived. Helped by missionary priests they succeeded in building up a clearly defined organization, even to the north of the great rivers, where indeed they never numbered less than a quarter of the population. No other Protestant country at this time treated its Catholic inhabitants with such lenience as the Dutch Republic.

In order to have a clear understanding of the period after 1795 we need to know the formative influences that shaped Church-State relations in the Republic. At one extreme there were those who sought to realize the Contra-Remonstrant ecclesiastical law. They wanted a Church as independent as possible of secular authority, organized from below, yet embracing the whole Republic. In this community of saints, corresponding to the secular community as a whole, the ministers were charged with ensuring that the Word of God was openly and truthfully proclaimed and that the sacraments were properly administered. According to this concept, the secular power bore its own responsibility in secular spheres, but at the same time, as 'nutrix et defensor ecclesiae', giving succour and protection to the Church. The civil powers had to co-operate in Christ's Kingdom on Earth, using the sword entrusted to them to root out all idolatry and false religion.<sup>3</sup> Such in a nutshell, was the theocratic vision that prevailed at the Synod of Dordrecht and which was afterwards elaborated and defended by the famous Utrecht theologian Voetius. The great majority of ministers and church leaders shared this vision. Inevitably tension existed between the civil magistrates, who inclined for political and economic reasons towards moderation in religious matters, and the orthodox ministers, who were concerned to regulate society in accordance with the teachings of the Reformed Church. But these orthodox circles were also aware of an inner contradiction between insistence that the Church should be as independent as

<sup>3</sup> E. Conring, *Kirche und Staat nach der Lehre der niederländischen Calvinisten in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Neukirchen, 1965), pp. 154 ff.

possible of the secular authorities and their demand for the support of these same authorities. This conflict deserves our special attention.<sup>4</sup>

In sharp contrast to the Contra-Remonstrants were the Remonstrants, who had been expelled from the Church in 1619. Initially their principles were no less firmly based on biblical theology. According to them, the civil magistrates should be supreme both in secular and spiritual matters; the rule of God's Word dictated that the State should promote the well-being of all in body and soul. Conflicts with the orthodox leaders in the Church were unavoidable, particularly because the majority of the tightly-knit governing patriciate in the towns, although remaining members of the Church, sympathized with the outlook of the Remonstrants. These regents considered that the Calvinist Church above all should be a broadly based comprehensive Church in which doctrinal contradictions were kept concealed. At Dordrecht the orthodox party merely gained a Pyrrhic victory. Increasingly, the provincial states, particularly those of Holland, adopted policies in line with the ideology of regents like Oldenbarnevelt, Grotius and Johan de Witt, of a theologian like Coccejus, and even of a philosopher like Spinoza, who stood outside the Christian tradition. The Christianity they defended inclined gradually towards a libertine or latitudinarian Protestantism. In their circles, the Reformed Church was seen primarily as an institution of public service, working in close co-operation with the secular authorities.<sup>5</sup>

In the eighteenth century the philosophy of the Enlightenment, with its more liberal attitudes and its recognition of the need for moral education and doctrinal and political tolerance, gained ground. The Protestant dissenters were, of course, the first to be influenced, but several theologians teaching in the universities controlled by the provincial states as well as many aristocratic regents and substantial members of the middle classes were also affected. Even many a minister of the privileged Church thought it important that the Christian Faith should be amenable to reason and put into practice.<sup>6</sup> As a rationalist approach to Natural Law developed, there also grew up a school of thought, which considered ecclesiastical organizations and activities as

<sup>4</sup> S. J. Fockema Andreae, 'De Kerk op wereldlijk terrein onder de Republiek', *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, XLI (1952-3), 146 ff. and Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid, passim*.

<sup>5</sup> W. H. de Beaufort, *De verhouding van den staat tot de verschillende kerkgenootschappen in de Republiek der Vereenigde Nederlanden 1581-1795* (Utrecht, 1868), pp. 134 ff; De Visser, *Kerk en Staat*, II, 336 ff. and 492; A. T. van Deursen, *Bavianen en slijkgeuzen. Kerk en kerkvolk ten tijde van Maurits en Oldenbarnevelt* (Assen, 1974), pp. 13 ff and 218 ff.

<sup>6</sup> L. Knappert, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk gedurende de 18e en 19e eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1912).

above all indispensable to the concord of the country and to the well-being of society. Eventually this outlook became dominant in the polity of the Republic. When then in the early nineteenth century the post-revolutionary Dutch State sought ways of controlling the Churches, it could take advantage of a secularising tendency that had already made its presence felt during the *ancien régime* of the Dutch Republic. This will more clearly emerge when we come to study the consequences of the 1795 Revolution.

## II

In his comprehensive treatment of the Batavian Revolution Simon Schama observes that the Batavian Republic 'must have been the only ally of republican France to have inserted an article into her constitution declaring that religion was "the source of all morality and prosperity which the State is bound to defend and maintain"''.<sup>7</sup> Although not wholly correct – in the first radical constitution of 1798 this passage was eventually left out – Schama's remark nonetheless draws our attention here to precisely the outlook which helps us to understand why the State subsequently exercised control over the Churches, a control which was of course not envisaged in 1795. Scarcely any hostility was shown by Dutch revolutionaries towards religion or the Churches as social phenomena. Indeed they themselves regarded the Batavian Revolution as a sign of Divine Providence.<sup>8</sup> If we were to eavesdrop on the debates in the National Assembly of 1796, the first modern parliament of the Dutch people, we should find ready confirmation of this thesis.

According to the Lutheran representative, Johannes Lublink de Jonge, religion can be interpreted in two ways. If by religion we mean 'everything pertaining to the practice of that religion, to the public and open administration of the sacraments, to doctrinal matters or to the various sentiments of the members of the different denominations', then according to Lublink, one was bound to conclude that the State should have no part in it. As chairman of a preparatory commission, he therefore advised the National Assembly to adopt the proposal that no 'ruling' Church should exist in the free Netherlands. Henceforth Church and State should remain separate. This advice was embodied in the famous decree of 5 August 1796, which stated

<sup>7</sup> S. Schama, *Patriots and Liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780-1813* (New York, 1977), p. 261.

<sup>8</sup> W. J. Goslinga, *De rechten van den mensch en burger* (The Hague, 1936), p. 88.

that 'all placards and resolutions of the former States General, born of the late union of Church and State' should be considered null and void.<sup>9</sup> The division between Church and State was raised to a constitutional principle on which there could be no retreat in the future.

This drastic and radical break with the past did not mean however, that the new State ceased to take any interest in the impact the Churches had on society. The deist rather than the atheist State had arrived. This point is confirmed by Lublink de Jonge, who went on to give an exemplary rationalist interpretation of religion. Religion, he argued, could also be taken in a general sense to embrace 'a number of duties which have been prescribed by the Supreme Being for the furtherance of our well-being'. Such a religion, according to Lublink, was bound to the State by the most essential ties, and should never and could never be separated from it. Because of its salutary influence, such a 'true religion' should be maintained and protected by the authorities. This one-time dissenter was prepared to allow the supervision of religious associations on the grounds that the State should not be endangered by the propagation of pernicious ideas. The theological doctrines of the individual Churches might be no business of the State, but it was concerned about their consequences, for good or ill.<sup>10</sup>

In the revolutionary triad of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' the principle of *equality* was here of paramount importance. Henceforth no Dutch government ever again dared to question in principle the equality between the Churches, an equality that was celebrated with much grandiloquence. It was at this time, too that the new term *kerkgenootschappen* (religious denominations), borrowed from the enlightened natural law, gained currency. The concept of equality between the Churches was implicit in each of the eight constitutions that successively provided the framework for constitutional law between 1798 and 1848.<sup>11</sup>

Social practice, however, was quite different from political theory. From the outset the more or less consistent application of the principle of equality constituted a threat to the complete *freedom* of the Churches. As a result of the revolution, a whole series of restrictions was imposed on the former 'ruling Church'. For example, in the province of Utrecht all the escutcheons and insignia of the nobility

<sup>9</sup> *Decreeten der Nationale Vergadering, representerende het volk van Nederland* (23 vol., The Hague, 1796-8) V, July 1796, inserted after p. 32; *Ibid.*, VI, August 1796, pp. 112-5; cf. De Visser, *Kerk en Staat*, III, 21 ff.

<sup>10</sup> *Decreeten*, V, July 1796, *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Grondwetten van Nederland. Teksten der achtereenvolgende staatsregelingen en grondwetten sedert 1795* (ed. G. W. Bannier, Zwolle, 1936).

were removed from the churches and throughout the country the *herenbanken*, the pews reserved for government officials, disappeared. The ban on bell-ringing and the holding of religious services outside the churches made little difference to the Catholics, whose religious life continued to be practised within a closed community. But to many Reformed Protestants these restrictions took on an altogether more sinister appearance. Their ministers might no longer wear their bands and cassocks out of doors, because the appearance of priests and monks in clerical garb in public was still forbidden on the grounds that such a manifestation of freedom might prove too provocative.<sup>12</sup> The provinces were required to conduct inquiries among the various denominations to discover their expenses, incomes and property, the number of both their members and clergy, and their resources for the care of their poor. That nothing came of all these inquiries may be attributed to Federalists' suspicions about the so-called Unitarist tendencies implied in the regulations. But no less important was the barely concealed fear that prevailed among members of the Reformed Church: was this not, in fact, in preparation for the secularization of Church property, or at least, its redistribution in the name of equality among all existing Churches? Such measures could only be damaging to the Calvinists.<sup>13</sup>

For many years disputes dragged on at every level of government concerning the distributions between the denominations of church buildings, property and income, and the related question of clerical stipends.<sup>14</sup> The conflicts certainly exacerbated the animosities between the members of the various Churches and thereby seriously impaired the brotherly love preached by the State. As a result the State was forced to become more closely involved in the life of the Churches. Even during the consultations which preceded the first draft constitution, numerous representatives put forward their views on this issue, their prolix speeches occupying many hundreds of pages in print.

Two opposing points of view were alternately championed. In one group political radicals combined with Roman Catholics to demand a far-reaching redistribution of property and the maintenance of the clergy by the Churches themselves. They rejected the notion that the

<sup>12</sup> C. Rogge, *Tafereel van de geschiedenis der jongste omwenteling in de Vereenigde Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 1796), pp. 480 ff.; *idem*, *Geschiedenis der staatsregeling voor het Bataafsche Volk* (Amsterdam, 1799), p. 139; P. Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de nederlandse stam* (3 vol., Amsterdam and Antwerp, 1959), III, 406 ff. and 422.

<sup>13</sup> Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague (hereafter A.R.A.), Wetgevende Colleges 1796- 1801, Inv. No. 492-4.

<sup>14</sup> P. J. van Kessel, 'Roomse prelaten en voormalig protestantse kerken in de Bataafse tijd', *Mededelingen van het nederlandse historisch instituut te Rome*, XXXIV (1969), 7-33.

State should pay clerical stipends as too costly and contrary to the principle of separation. The radicals among them feared that existing as well as new sects would be able, by appealing to the notion of equality, to propagate their own particular heresies and fanaticisms with the help of money from the State. The Catholic opponents of state stipends for the clergy of all non-Reformed Churches believed not only that they had no need of such 'benefits', as the survival of Dutch Catholicism since the Reformation demonstrated, but that such a proposal put the freedom of the Church in jeopardy. Ranged on the other side were the enlightened members of the main Church under threat: they were not unsympathetic to a moderate degree of State authority. It is important to note in the light of subsequent developments that this opinion was shared by Schimmelpenninck, later to become Grand Pensionary, and Van Maanen, later to become William I's Minister of Justice. This group claimed that if stipends ceased to be paid to the ministers of the Reformed Church, most of the churches of this denomination, which had the support of five-eighths of the nation, would be ruined. The threat alone would provoke unrest. On the other hand, if the principle of state stipends were extended to the clergy of all denominations this would ensure their loyalty to the State, thereby preventing the use of coercion by the churches against their members as well as keeping fanatical tendencies in check.<sup>15</sup>

Of the two alternative opinions, that is either equal stipends for the clergy of all denominations or none at all, the latter prevailed. The alliance between the supporters of the radical revolution and the Catholics, which must have struck contemporaries elsewhere in Europe as singular, though it seemed natural enough in the Dutch context, exerted its influence on the constitution which came into being in 1798, as the result of a radical coup. This constitution stated that each denomination should look after itself; a further series of interim measures settled the outcome of the conflict in a way greatly to the disadvantage of the former 'ruling' Church.<sup>16</sup> But the settlement thus imposed proved to be no more than a shortlived truce. Soon furious disputes concerning church buildings and church property were again raging unabated. In general, the politically inexperienced rulers of the Batavian Directory were unable to cope as the problems increased. At this juncture Napoleon, who wanted peace, greater financial support and an authoritarian administration that

<sup>15</sup> *Dagverhaal der handelingen van de Nationale Vergadering representerende het Volk van Nederland* (9 vol., The Hague 1796-8), II, 388-558. For a clear account by an interested contemporary see Rogge, *Geschiedenis*, pp. 307-33.

<sup>16</sup> M. J. M. van der Heijden, *De dageraad van de emancipatie der katholieken* (Nijmegen, 1947), pp. 197 ff.

would be both more broadly based and amenable, engineered another *coup d'état* in the Batavian Republic.

### III

Thus in 1801 the *Staatsbewind* (Regency of State) came into being, heralding a period of aristocratic and authoritarian reaction. Just as Napoleon had steered the revolution towards dictatorship in France, so too in his Dutch satellite state the revolutionary principles of libertarianism and individualism had to make way for those consonant with the more authoritarian community of the Batavian Commonwealth.<sup>17</sup>

The consequences of this reaction were also to be seen in religious affairs. This was the time for those who had previously been on the losing side, among others Schimmelpenninck and Van Maanen, who, it is true, were not at this stage important figures. As the Reformed Church had been unwilling to accept the fate prescribed for it under the egalitarian scheme, it was now prepared to endorse the principles of State support for the Churches and State control over the Churches, principles developed in accordance with the spirit of Napoleonic authoritarianism. Consequently in the next years the autochthonous tradition, already developing as we observed before 1795, was to adapt itself to an authoritarian and revolutionary regime whose main source of inspiration was France. The freedom of the Churches was also seriously eroded as a result of the continuing failure to satisfy their material needs. Their freedom was further endangered as the reaction continued to gather momentum. The development was however gradual, and during the next decade, when regimes and constitutions followed one another in quick succession, it meant little more than the State making ever bolder *claims* to control the ecclesiastical organizations. The documents show that contemporaries in the Netherlands took little interest in the debates then going on elsewhere in Europe as to the ideal Church-State relationship. In this respect things were to be very different during the government of William I twenty years later. Though certain aspects still have to be systematically investigated, it is my initial impression that while the religious

<sup>17</sup> There are good reasons for regarding 1801 as the turning point, as C. H. E. de Wit argued in his doctoral dissertation *De strijd tussen aristocratie en democratie in Nederland, 1780-1848* (Heerlen, 1965), or 1805, as Schama claimed in the study cited above in footnote 7. Though the constitutions of 1801 and 1805 are not unimportant for our subject, I will argue that the constitution of 1806 marked a new departure in relations between Church and State.

policy adopted by the new revolutionary authorities was broadly inspired by the French Gallican model and took into account the wishes of the French, it was chiefly shaped by the swiftly changing realities and special circumstances of the Dutch situation. The religious policy of the secular authorities provides clear evidence for this assertion.

There was however no reason to expect, at least on the basis of the constitution of 1801, that the State was about to meddle significantly in religious affairs. True, each citizen was obliged to belong to a religious denomination. A church tax, to be levied at a rate as yet undecided, would then be paid to the appropriate denomination. Nothing, however, came of this proposal. The State Regency had to give, even before it had begun to rule, assurances that it would not interfere any further with the arrangements and organization of the Churches.<sup>18</sup> This did not, however, represent the real intention of the new government and particularly of Van der Palm, the important member of the Council of the Interior, who was left to find a solution to the seemingly insuperable problems concerning property and stipends. Although Van der Palm himself did not want 'all links between Church and State to cease', he devised, at the bidding of the government, a new ecclesiastical constitution. In so doing he sought to protect the Reformed Church as far as possible, and preserve its historical privileges. For the Roman Catholic Church, which appeared after 1795 to be rather too free of State control, he outlined a plan for the re-establishment of the hierarchy after an interval of more than two hundred years.<sup>19</sup> In fact these schemes never came to fruition. Still the Regency of State could comfort itself in 1804 by stating in private that 'the control of the external manifestations of religion in general and the admission of the clergy in particular' did not contravene the decision taken eight years earlier, to separate Church and State.<sup>20</sup>

Recently, notes taken by the Grand Pensionary, Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, for his own use, have come to light. These notes were made in preparation for his investiture in 1805 as Grand Pensionary with sole authority at the request of the French. From these it is clear that the Grand Pensionary was not personally interested in wielding authority over the Church. To avoid difficulties, as much as possible was left undefined in the new constitution, but even so it went a step

<sup>18</sup> A.R.A., Uitvoerend Bewind, Inv. no. 179, 28 September, 1801, 38.

<sup>19</sup> *Gedenkstukken der algemeene geschiedenis van Nederland van 1795 tot 1840* (ed. H. T. Colenbrander, 10 parts in 22 vol., The Hague, 1905-22), Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie 5, IV, 1, lxx-lxxvi; cf. A. de Groot, *Leven en arbeid van J. H. van der Palm*, (Wageningen, 1960), pp. 97-100.

<sup>20</sup> A.R.A., Staatsbewind, Inv. No. 370, 23 August 1804, 26.

further in principle than its predecessor.<sup>21</sup> Schimmelpenninck was charged with the *Hooge Politie in de geheele Republiek* (High Superintendence throughout the Republic) in both civil and religious affairs. In fact during Schimmelpenninck's rule, which lasted little more than a year, the government worked on a settlement which would bring the two main denominations, the Reformed and the Roman Catholic Churches, under the control of the State in exchange for stipends for their clergy. The régime confined its attention for the time being to the former 'ruling' Church, with which in the meantime some old ties had been re-established. Since 1802 the State once more financed the annual synods in the departments (formerly provinces), the *commissarissen politiek* re-appeared to look after the link between Church and State, the exclusively and avowedly Protestant faculties of theology came into their own again, while the restoration of the *herenbanken* in the churches gave visible expression to the spiritual aspect of secular authority.<sup>22</sup>

During the reign (1806-10) of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the French Emperor's brother, the principle of State interference in the affairs of the Churches began to be realized. As before in the time of the Batavian Revolution, this new policy was elaborated by Dutchmen, but under the aegis of and in accordance with the wishes of the great French nation. The ground was prepared in the Netherlands by the convergence of three lines of development. First there was an urgent need to reach a conclusive settlement concerning ministers' salaries, a settlement which, considering the greater stress laid on egalitarian principles under the Catholic King of Holland, also made the matter of state stipends for the Catholic clergy an issue of immediate concern. Secondly, there was the apparently irresistible pressure of the past. In socially and politically influential circles, there existed what might be called a silent *communis opinio* concerning the mutual advantage to be gained from a close relationship between the State and the erstwhile privileged Church. Finally, a national bureaucracy emerged which was intended to bring into being the new unitary state. Following the French example, a nationwide administration developed which created a strictly controlled, uniform and well-ordered framework within which the ideals of the enlightened citizenry were to be realized. With such aims the administration naturally had good reason to intervene in the affairs of the Churches, for their 'teachers',

<sup>21</sup> Private archives of Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck, property of his descendants, kept at Nijenhuis, Diepenheim (Overijssel), Inv. no. A79. I am grateful to my research assistant, Mr. T. Clemens, for having drawn these papers to my attention.

<sup>22</sup> De Visser, *Kerk en Staat*, III, 86.

with a measure of goodwill, could provide indispensable services in the 'education of the people'.

One of the new government officials, Jacobus Didericus Janssen, deserves special mention in this connexion. Brought up in the enlightened theology he was a staunch member of the Reformed Church. From the appointment of Schimmelpenninck as Grand Pensionary in 1805 to the establishment of the United Kingdom in 1815, Janssen was responsible for nearly all the reports and drafts which attempted to give concrete form to Church-State relations in the Netherlands.<sup>23</sup>

Louis Napoleon therefore found the small kingdom quite prepared to make the Churches the servants of his administration, in keeping with his brother's ideas. Nevertheless, the new constitution was as much a turning-point as the decision to separate Church and State had been ten years before. The constitution stipulated that any measure could be taken so long as it served 'the *organization*, protection and performance of all Acts of Worship'. Those in authority were aware that a fundamental change had taken place. Hendrik Mollerus, who had been appointed as minister for the separate Department of Worship, wrote to the King in May 1808: 'The Government of this country has never taken cognizance of the nature and constitution of the different denominations in the Kingdom, of the conditions, appointments and stipends of its teachers, nor has it studied the supervision of clergy and administrators, nor what came under the regulations of the enforcement of religious law and discipline.'<sup>24</sup> On the basis of information at the disposal of the government, it reduced the number of Reformed ministers so that funds became available to provide state stipends for at least some Catholic and Lutheran clergy. While the State retained, as before, its financial ties with the Reformed Church, albeit on a reduced scale, it also laid at this time the very limited and somewhat arbitrary foundations of its financial support for the Catholic Church, which have remained unchanged to the present day.

Two separate government-appointed commissions, made up of prominent and moderate Reformed Protestants and Catholics, directed their attention to the internal structure of their respective Churches and their relations with the State. Neither the Protestant nor the Catholic Churches objected strongly to the principle of ecclesiastical organizations being framed by a government commission. But it was

<sup>23</sup> C. W. Pape, *Het leven en werken van J. D. Janssen* ('s-Hertogenbosch, 1855); J. C. A. van Loon, *Het Algemeen Reglement van 1816* (Wageningen, 1942), pp. 48 ff. and *passim*.

<sup>24</sup> This letter and subsequent records in A.R.A., Staatsbewind, Inv. No. 142, 2 August 1808, 26.

quite different when it came to their implementation. In the case of the Reformed Church the government departed from the proposals that had been put forward. The form of ecclesiastical organization that was finally adopted – and on which despite opposition a start had already been made – gave the King great influence in the appointment of members of the national synod, an opportunity to intervene in the debates of the synod and responsibility for the doctrinal freedom of ministers. It was only because the Netherlands was annexed by France in 1810 that the Reformed Church managed to evade this Church Order which had been carried through by Reformed officials during the reign of a Catholic monarch.<sup>25</sup> Apart from a proposal to re-establish the hierarchy, the conclusions of the Catholic State commission were of little help to the State whose policy was inspired by the Gallican spirit. The members of the commission, for the most part representatives of a pro-papal minority Catholicism, wanted to let matters depend upon the outcome of deliberations between the Bishops (who were soon to be appointed) and the Curia. With the help of some enlightened Gallican clerics, the Department of Worship was still intent on proceeding with much more radical draft regulations for a national Catholic Church, when the annexation of 1810 robbed Louis Napoleon's government of any chance of success in this matter. In any case these chances could never have been very great, given that in the background stood the internationally experienced curial administration whose relations with the emperor were already strained.<sup>26</sup>

#### IV

One thing is clear: the period of total separation between Church and State, when the Churches enjoyed almost complete freedom and the State kept aloof on principle, was shortlived. Historians who write from an ecclesiastical standpoint are accustomed to blame the Churches for not having immediately grasped the freedom offered to them after the Revolution.<sup>27</sup> Leaving aside the question as to whether there is

<sup>25</sup> A.R.A., Eredienst vóór 1813, Inv. No. 135 and 140; De Visser, *Kerk en Staat*, III, 92 ff.; Van Loon, *Algemeen Reglement*, pp. 59 ff.

<sup>26</sup> A.R.A., Eredienst vóór 1813, Inv. No. 140; A. E. M. Ribberink, 'De aartspriester Cramer en de strijd om de Kerk 1809-1814', *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de katholieke kerk in Nederland*, IV (1962), 235 ff.; *Romeinse bescheiden voor de geschiedenis der Rooms-Katholieke kerk in Nederland, 1727-1853* (ed. P. Polman O.F.M. and P. J. van Kessel, 3 vol., The Hague, 1959-75), Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie 153, III, 598 ff.

<sup>27</sup> A. Goslinga, *De beteekenis van de omwenteling van 1795* (Amsterdam, 1927), p. 30; A. J. Bronkhorst, 'Die Niederländisch-Reformierte Kirche' in *Die Reformierten*

any point in reproaching the past, it seems to me that opportunities which in retrospect may appear to have been wasted, were almost of necessity, as closer study shows, overtaken by events. The threatened diversion of financial resources away from the privileged 'ruling' Church made, as we have already observed, that Church receptive to an alliance with the State, which in the nature of things involved interference. Following the reaction of 1801, a central government body, which was essentially sympathetic to the Reformed Church, took measures to safeguard its interests. The Reformed Church found itself ill-equipped for any negotiations with the new unitary State because its experience and institutions had been shaped by the decentralized constitution of the old United Provinces. The government's sympathetic attitude towards the Reformed Church arose largely from a mutual hatred and fear of Catholicism which was undeniably determined to exact retribution. The leaders of the new government were convinced, along with most leading Reformed churchmen that only a broadly-based and enlightened Reformed Church in which every one would find something to his liking and which maintained the spiritual tradition of the institution of the privileged Church, could provide steady support for the Dutch State. Only in this way could Church-State relations in the Batavian Republic conform to the Napoleonic pattern with its emphasis on the close interdependence of the two spheres. It is surely anachronistic to suppose that the orthodox wing of the Reformed Church, with its more or less theocratic tradition, could have benefited from a separation which it basically did not want and whose revolutionary origins it abhorred.

Because of the discrimination suffered by Catholics in the Dutch Republic, the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church was quite different. Yet it should be said that the opportunities for developing its own forms of organization without interference were also severely limited at that time. The officials of the Curia feared that with the appointment of Dutch Bishops they would lose their hold, however weak it might have been on occasions, on Dutch Catholics, and that precisely for that reason the Church's independence would be endangered. For decades this fear nourished the suspicions Rome harboured towards the proposed re-establishment of the hierarchy. That there really would be a separation of Church and State was quite beyond the imagination of the Curia. And events were to show that the Roman prelates had a greater sense of reality than their recently emancipated co-religionists from that traditionally Calvinist strong-

hold behind the dykes who gloried in the Revolution. What consternation it would have caused within that Protestant country if the establishment of the hierarchy, which was sought shortly after the Revolution, had indeed been forced through without any State intervention. Probably it would have delayed the so-called social emancipation of Dutch Catholics for even longer than did their flirtations with the increasingly discredited Ultrademocrats. After 1801 Rome's unfortunate experiences with Napoleon's Concordat made it suspicious: on that account the Curia could be expected to reject the request for recognition of a so-called free and fully organized Church.

The existence of the *Oud-Bisschoppelijke Cleresie* (as the small Jansenist Church which came into being in 1713 was known) complicated the situation still further. Its three bishops, whose small following was compensated for by claims going back several centuries, were both an offence to the Catholics and a tiresome problem for the secular authorities whose preference for a neat, well-ordered Church organization was increasingly evident. The Curia, for its part, feared with good reason that the State – despite the formal separation of the two powers – would want to include at least one of these Bishops in any new national Church organization. In this way conservative Rome seemed to be the most effective advocate of relative Church freedom in the face of a State born of the Revolution.<sup>28</sup>

From 1810 until 1813 the small but strategically and economically important Northern Netherlands was incorporated in the French Empire. In this period the Churches were threatened with total subjection to the State. At first Paris showed no interest in a settlement of Church affairs in this recently annexed territory. When during a visit of inspection Napoleon finally became convinced of the financial plight of the Reformed Church, he decided in 1812 to have all denominations in the Netherlands organized according to the laws of the Empire.<sup>29</sup> The consequences of this were clear to everyone. The Churches were to become institutions of government, serving general policy in precisely the same way as the army, police and administration. Of the initial, and not wholly unsuccessful, attempts made by Jacobus Janssen to strike a balance between the demands of an artificial and administratively effective organization at the top and the needs of the Dutch Calvinist Church Order at the congregational level, hardly any trace can be found in the regulations eventually laid down by Paris. A plan of

<sup>28</sup> M. van de Sande-Meijjs, 'Het nieuwe apostolische vicariaat Breda en de ijdele hoop op eigen bisschoppen in de Bataafse Republiek', *Mededelingen van het nederlands historisch instituut te Rome* XXXV (1971), 195-262.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. J. Godel, 'L'église selon Napoléon', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, XVII (1970), 837-45.

organization was also prepared for the Roman Catholic Church, and although the Church leaders were not ill-disposed to it in principle, they viewed it with scepticism. One only has to think of the problems surrounding the *Oud-Bisschoppelijke Cleresie* which had been disbanded at a stroke of the pen and brought back into the Roman fold. However, Napoleon's downfall prevented the realization in the Netherlands of a religious order which had been viewed by all concerned with fear and trembling.<sup>30</sup>

## V

When William Frederick of Orange-Nassau, the first national monarch of the Netherlands, began late in 1813, to put the affairs of his new principality in order, he subscribed to the policy of Schimmelpenninck and Louis Napoleon in religious matters as in so many other areas of domestic administration. William I did not want to restore the old order, so much as to adapt the State to the new circumstances. This aspiration remained just as strong when in 1815 the Southern and Northern Netherlands were united into one kingdom. Jacobus Jansen, whose professional star remained in the ascendant, rightly observed concerning the frustrating time he had spent drawing up plans during Napoleon's rule that it had at any rate increased his knowledge of what was indispensable for the 'preparation of a good, truly Dutch organization'.<sup>31</sup>

At the time it was generally accepted that such an organization had to come, and that it should be planned and executed by the secular authorities. As far as the Protestant Churches were concerned, the settlement was achieved with relative ease, for it was entirely consistent with the search for prosperity which was informed by those principles of enlightened didacticism and ethical authoritarianism so characteristic of William's kingdom, whose origins lay in the Batavian Republic. In 1816 the Dutch Reformed Church, with its one and a quarter million members, comprising approximately 55 per cent of the population of the Northern Netherlands, received the *Algemeen Reglement* (General Order) by royal decree. By this the longestablished Presbyterian system of synodal government was replaced by one in which the King exercised very extensive powers. Although objections were raised here and there against the sweeping powers of the synod

<sup>30</sup> A.R.A., Eredienst vóór 1813, Inv. No. 143; De Visser, *Kerk en Staat*, III, 129 ff.; Ribberink, 'Aartspriester Cramer', 238 ff.

<sup>31</sup> A.R.A., Eredienst vóór 1813, Inv. No. 143: Introduction to 'Verzameling van kerkelijke stukken, 1811-1813', I D.

and against the lack of guarantees for the preservation of the true doctrine, these were quickly rejected by the government. Two years later a similar arrangement was imposed on the Lutherans who made up 2½ per cent of the population. The Mennonites, still fewer in number, remained exempt from State intervention, for the revealing reason that they were almost totally self-supporting!<sup>32</sup>

The Catholics with approximately 800,000 souls, made up nearly 40 per cent of the population in the Northern part of the United Kingdom, and yet the plans for the organization of their Church were not carried out. The State repeatedly put forward proposals of its own concerning such politically delicate matters as the division of dioceses, clerical stipends, influence over ecclesiastical appointments, and supervision of religious life. But Rome which had to approve such arrangements in the form of a Concordat, rejected these proposals as being too Gallican and erastian, though it was not opposed in principle to an agreement devised by the State. For this reason too, the vaguely-worded Concordat, so painstakingly concluded in 1827, was never put into effect. Again the problem raised by the incorporation of the Jansenist *Oud-Bisschoppelijke Cleresie* provided one of the most serious obstacles. Once more the Catholic Church seemed better able to protect its freedom than the Reformed Church. Yet Rome's disapproval could not protect the Church against high-handed measures taken by the State with respect to the compulsory training of priests along rationalist and erastian lines, nor against restrictions imposed on the resurgent monastic life and on independent Church education. Only a handful of clergy with enlightened theological ideas and Gallican sympathies supported the government, which became the target for fierce ultramontane criticism, particularly in the South. The decision to set up a State school for candidates for the priesthood (the *Collegium Philosophicum*) which recalls Joseph II's *General-seminare* though it was based in fact on the Prussian-Bavarian example, proved to be an irretrievable blunder.<sup>33</sup> Ultramontane Catholics were so strongly opposed to such a proposal that they were prepared to make common cause with the radical liberals despite their great ideological differences. This 'monstrous association', which seemed so extraordinary at the time, gained widespread support in the Belgian provinces and it helped to bring about the division of the United Kingdom in 1830.

More than any other monarch in Dutch history, William I must be

<sup>32</sup> Van Loon, *Algemeen Reglement*, pp. 71 ff.; O. J. de Jong, *Nederlandse kerkgeschiedenis* (Nijkerk, 1972), p. 309.

<sup>33</sup> A survey in G. Gorris, *J. G. le Sage ten Broek en de eerste fase van de emancipatie der katholieken* (2 vol., Amsterdam, 1947-9), I, 70 ff.

held responsible for the general conduct of affairs and in particular for the religious policy that was pursued by his government. The driving forces behind this government were very diverse.

First there was the fusion, already evident during the period of French domination, between the centralistic ideals of the administration, police and justice, associated with the interests and wishes of the well-to-do middle class, and the latitudinarian notions concerning the function of the 'public' Church (which in turn resembled the traditional sentiments formerly cherished by the governing patriciates in the towns). In these circles it went without saying that the Reformed Church enjoyed a special relationship with the authorities. Because it was particularly favoured and protected, it was in duty bound to promote tolerance and peace, and was pre-eminently fitted to assist the education of the people. So when in the 1830s some orthodox ministers expressed the wish, tinged with protest and reproach, to go their own way, both the leaders of the Reformed Church and the State authorities co-operated to root out, as the King expressed it in his defence of the government, 'intolerance, strife and factions'.<sup>34</sup> The action undertaken at the behest of the Church against the dissenting brethren, was harsh: the meeting of the 'secessionists' were broken up, several of the dissident ministers were thrown into prison, and soldiers, whose conduct recalls the *missionnaires bottés* of Louis XIV, were quartered in the houses of many of them.

Furthermore it was considered good form for people of breeding to view with a mixture of apprehension and contempt those of their Catholic compatriots with whom they associated; indeed it was thought preferable not to associate with them at all. These true-blue patriots would ask the State for extra supervision of 'such religious denominations which are bent on domination and conversion and which, moreover, maintain relations with a certain prominent foreign power'.<sup>35</sup>

Moreover, in the Department of Roman Catholic Worship a spirit of enlightened Catholicism prevailed. It had come under the department responsible since the time of Louis Napoleon for all denominations, but had then been separated. Though they concurred in the supremacy of the State over the Church, the views of the Catholics working in this department were not always unanimous; but they were all fiercely opposed to the views of the Church leaders and the great majority of the Catholic community. The worldly head of the department, Goubau d'Hovorst, who came from the Southern Netherlands, was an

<sup>34</sup> *Gedenkstukken*, X, 5, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, 50, p. 591.

<sup>35</sup> W. Broes, *De kerk en de staat in wederzijdsche betrekking volgens de geschiedenis* (4 vol., Amsterdam, 1830-2), IV, 1, p. 101.

advocate of Gallicanism and Josephinism. He was assisted, and for much of the time dominated by his deputy Van Ghert, a Hegelian who was more familiar with the German *Staatskirchentum*.

The King moreover always used to compare carefully the advice of these gentlemen with the thoroughly Napoleonic views expounded by Van Maanen, a dyed-in-the-wool lawyer and William's Minister of Justice. A member of the Remonstrant Church Van Maanen was in total agreement with the leaders of the Reformed Church. As a scrupulous scholar of legal history, he regularly drew the attention of his monarch to putative rights (and their limits!) which derived from the time of his Habsburg predecessors. Furthermore the eighteenth-century *jus canonicum* with its Gallican and Jansenist nuances, more than once furnished the minister, who was a stickler for order in everything, with a legal justification for his policies.<sup>36</sup>

Last but not least there was the contribution of the King himself, indecisive in his actions but consistent in his thinking.<sup>37</sup> When the Batavian Republic was tentatively seeking for the first time to establish its authority over the Churches, this exiled descendant of the House of Orange had found no difficulty in ruling as an enlightened despot over the secularized Prince-Bishopric of Fulda in Germany. Between 1802 and 1806 he had discovered to his satisfaction how much could be achieved by the far reaching application of his *jus circa sacra* (i.e. his right as a prince to superintend all denominations in his territory) as this had developed in the Lutheran tradition of the *Staatskirchentum*. It comes as no surprise to learn that William I, with an eye to his negotiations with the Holy See, kept himself fully informed, through various channels, about the ideas and practices followed by his fellow princes in Germany in the matter of Church-State relations. His failure to realize his extravagant ideas – in his unwarranted optimism he went much further than any of his advisors – was a great disappointment to him. Once in a sulk, he declared that he had never interfered with the *jus in sacra*, the Church's right to regulate its own internal affairs. Had he not always left unmolested 'the dogma and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church'? As a right-minded Protestant he immediately added: 'The abuses that still exist there clearly show this'.<sup>38</sup> William I was not sufficiently alive to

<sup>36</sup> His thorough knowledge of ancient law is evident from A.R.A., Staatssecretarie, Inv. No. 6164 and the annotated bibliographies in A.R.A., R.K. Eredienst, 1815-1870, Inv. No. 358, 33 and Kabinet des Konings (1963), Inv. No. 6888.

<sup>37</sup> J. A. Bornewasser, "'Het credo... geen rede van twist.'" Ter verklaring van een koninklijk falen (1826-1829)', *Archief voor de geschiedenis van de katholieke kerk in Nederland*, XIX (1977), 234-87.

<sup>38</sup> A.R.A., Kabinet des Konings (1963), Inv. No. 6838.

the disastrous consequences that followed from his ministers' contempt for popular Catholicism throughout his kingdom. Moreover the enlightened Catholicism which had favoured his Church-State policies in Fulda, was conspicuously weak in the United Kingdom. Finally he did not appreciate that in Germany, too, *Staatskirchentum* was in retreat before the rising tide of Liberalism. He showed a similar lack of understanding when confronted by the strength of orthodox feeling within and from the mid-1830s from outside his own Church. As a true Protestant he believed he had done his duty by those of his subjects who had remained loyal to the faith of their forebears when he bestowed on them, through the *Algemeen Reglement* of 1816, a paternal home which was smoothly administered, soundly financed and where all could dwell.

In Protestant historiography there has been a protracted and involved debate about whether William I's treatment of the Church was correct.<sup>39</sup> It has been pointed out by some that under the first King of the House of Orange, the State regularly violated the *jus in sacra*. According to this view, the secular authorities had already exceeded their right of supervision, the *jus circa sacra*, by the mere fact of their interference in its organization. As an historian I have always followed this discussion with amazement because such notions were, even at the time, capable of widely differing interpretations. Can even a Church historian properly take sides in canonical disputes, conducted so long ago, whose frame of reference is so clearly determined by the culture of their own times? I do not think that it should be the task of history to pass judgement, like some sort of latter-day Court of Appeal, on what is right and what is not right. Instead it has been my humbler intention to explain the apparently inevitable and insoluble problems facing the Churches during this crucial fifty-year period, as they endeavoured to defend their specific character against the demands of the post-revolutionary State.

## VI

A final glance at the course of events during the reign of William II (1840-9) best discloses the issues that had been at stake throughout the period. His administration may be considered as a time of structural crisis but it should also be seen as a watershed. In many fields the State began to withdraw from its involvement in society. Concern for social welfare decreased and under the influence of the nascent liberal-

<sup>39</sup> Van Loon, *Algemeen Reglement*, pp. 187 ff.

ism the extent to which the concepts 'State' and 'Society' overlapped sensibly diminished. In religious affairs too, the State clearly retreated. Thus, during the reign of William II (the so-called 'friend of Catholics') the attitude of the government was not unsympathetic to the Catholics, despite strong resistance from the Protestants.<sup>40</sup> The position of the Reformed Church was fundamentally changed by a royal decree of 1842. Henceforth all changes to the existing Church Order could only come from within the Church and ratification by the government was only necessary in order to safeguard the constitution and the peace and security of the State. In this way the Reformed Church participated in the process of liberalization which was under way everywhere. According to the decree, neither the constitution nor the *jus circa sacra* permitted any further interference in the established organization of the Church.<sup>41</sup>

The constitution of 1848, which on the whole did justice to the liberal mind of its eminent author Thorbecke, set the seal on this process of liberalization and gave it further impetus. In the view of Thorbecke, the Churches like all other corporate bodies in the State should have an increasing right to freedom. Since the State had, as a result of the revolution, permanently broken its links with the Church, the time had come, Thorbecke argued, for society, which naturally included religion, to develop independently of the State. The religious denominations were entitled on account of their special character to be held in particular respect just as they had in the past been subjected to special control.<sup>42</sup> That principle more or less provided the point of departure in 1853 for the law concerning religious denominations. It was intended by means of relatively minor articles to still Protestant agitation concerning the episcopal organization of the Roman Catholic Church, established in the same year without any Concordat or State intervention. This law represents the last symptoms of the struggle between special supervision and special guarantees of freedom.<sup>43</sup>

A new age dawned for the Dutch Roman Catholic Church, which witnessed not only the organization of the Church, but also the extension and deepening of its religious life and the development of Catholic culture. The process of the social emancipation of its mem-

<sup>40</sup> L. G. J. Verberne, 'Willem II, koning der Nederlanden', *Brabants jaarboek* (1950), 131-49.

<sup>41</sup> D. P. D. Fabius, *Het Reglement van '52* (Amsterdam, 1888), pp. 123-4.

<sup>42</sup> J. A. Bornewasser, 'Thorbecke and the Churches', *Acta historiae neerlandicae*, VII (1974), 165 ff.

<sup>43</sup> J. Schokking, *Historisch-juridische schets van de wet van den 10den september 1853, tot regeling van het toezicht op de onderscheidene kerkgenootschappen* (Leiden, 1894).

bers gained momentum. Now at last they reaped the full benefits of the freedom, for which they had fought during the previous half-century with reasonable success. The experience of the Reformed Church was very different. True the Church in 1852 made its regulations more democratic.<sup>44</sup> But because traditional notions of Church-State relations lingered on it could not entirely rid itself of what was increasingly coming to be considered as the *vitium originis* of 1816. These circumstances would lead nearly forty years later, in the early 1890s, to a new split, when the orthodox Calvinists, the *Gereformeerden*, broke with the *Hervormden*. Their confessional, social and political organizations which had developed since the late 1870s alongside those of the Catholics, succeeded in using the liberal freedom of organization. By forging the instruments which could put an end to the surviving monopolies in the State and the cultural and intellectual life of the nation, the orthodox Calvinists as well as the Catholics brought their independent and influential Churches to maturity within a truly pluralistic State. A subsequent phase in the relationship between State and the Churches, that of the process of 'denominational segregation', or if you prefer *verzuiling*, was under way.

<sup>44</sup> Fabius, *Reglement van '52*, pp. 387 ff.

## 8. 'Bridled Emotion:' English Free Churchmen, Culture and Catholic Values c. 1870 to c. 1945

C. BINFIELD

EARLY in 1871 an intelligent Anglican noblewoman visited one of the sights of Victorian England:

the famous 'Saltaire', a complete settlement built by Sir Titus Salt for the work-people employed in his mighty factory (woollen and mixed fabrics). There are numbers of pretty almshouses, beautiful schools and cottages, a great self-supporting dining-hall, an infirmary, a splendid Mechanics' Institute in course of building, and a big heathen temple in the midst, serving as Independent Chapel. [So much for what a local guidebook said was 'stated to be the most exquisite example of pure Italian architecture in the kingdom,' all its seats free.<sup>1</sup>] We saw as much as we had time for. 1,000 looms at work. The inside of the chapel surprised me, for I fancied the Independents did not differ much from the Church in doctrine and Liturgy; but the arrangements did not look like this: the organ presides over the E. end, with the singers' seats in front of it, and in front of *them*, the marble slab that serves for Communion table. However, Mr. Law [her host during the excursion] says that his sect would join the Church if she was disestablished.<sup>2</sup>

In the autumn of the following year the same noblewoman worshipped in the parish church of Holker, a Lancashire estate belonging to her husband's family:

The horrible chapel sat upon me more than usual; when once one has the Bible notion strong upon one that holy places are places of God's special Presence, that our first design in them should be to give Him glory and do Him worship; when one's next desire is that people should be taught by all they see in church that we are all priests and people to fall down before One Throne, and that all our services culminate in the Holy Eucharist – then a mean conventicle is almost unbearable. It insults the Majesty of God, Who gives us richly all things, and to whose House we only bring what is base; and it teaches the congregation disunion and solitariness in prayer each in his own

<sup>1</sup> W. Cudworth, *Round about Bradford* (Bradford, 1876), p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> *The Diary of Lady Frederick Cavendish* (ed. J. Bailey, 2 vol., London 1927), II, 93-4, entry for 14 January 1871.

selfish corner, while the only thing elevated as the centre of their devotion is the pulpit.<sup>3</sup>

Fifty years later, two public school boys on a reading fortnight went service tasting in the Isle of Thanet:

...we had seen a funny little room out of one of the cottages with a notice up.  
'Lords Day blessing of Bread at 11.

The Gospel will be preached here every Sabbath  
evening at Six. Visitors cordially welcome.'

Molson immediately decided that we must go there. We arrived a little late and came into a low, rather pleasant little room, hung in places with faded red stuff and texts. There were about a dozen people in it counting the acting ministers ...They read through an execrable hymn and then sang it. I never heard such singing anywhere and so loud. Their God had endued them with a most phenomenal capacity of self-unconsciousness. Then one of them prayed: 'Our Father, when we think of all youve a bin a doing for us and how wonderful youve kep' us. We thank you for bringing us together and we pray together for them as is gathered together like us. And when we think of ow you sent you're son Jesus to save us -' and so on for about ten minutes. Then they sang again, always reading through the whole hymn first. Molson all this time was prostrate with laughter; I, by repeating the diplomatic situation of 1789, managed to keep fairly quiet. Then they read a chapter of the Bible and discussed it verse by verse. The protagonists, a Mr. Cole and the minister, were I suppose the most intellectual there. They seemed incapable of consequent thought. Molson felt drawn to enter the discussion and made a peculiarly fatuous remark which they thought out at great length. Luckily his laughter would not allow another question. Then they sang again. The minister came and shook hand with us afterwards and spoke to us. It was obviously very unusual for them to have a visitor.<sup>4</sup>

Ten years after that, in June 1931, a self-confessed Orthodox Dissenter, bursar of a Cambridge College, was trying to save a parish church in Lincoln from demolition:

They entirely overlook, he wrote, the general value to religion and to the Established Church of historic buildings in prominent places in the city... If no service is ever held in St. Peter's and all its endowments are used elsewhere, the church as a place of private prayer and a religious monument is not without its religious value, to say nothing of its architectural value... We have taken account of the intangible side of religion, which any religious person knows is the most important part of it.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 138, entry for 15 September 1872.

<sup>4</sup> *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh* (ed. M. Davie, London, 1976), p. 136, entry for 24 August 1921.

<sup>5</sup> F. Brittain, *Bernard Lord Manning: a Memoir* (Cambridge, 1942), p. 51.

Perhaps these random quotations, spanning sixty years, should be dismissed as selective history. Certainly it is hard to imagine a less likely quartet than Lady Frederick Cavendish, Liberal Prime Minister's niece and Whig duke's daughter-in-law, Bernard Manning, Cambridge historian, Hugh Molson, future Tory politician, and Evelyn Waugh, papist and novelist. Yet they overlap, and not just in time. They belonged to the intelligent classes. They were still, therefore, susceptible to religious influences. Lady Frederick's excursion of January 1871, in the company of one Bradford Congregationalist to the creation of another, was the sort of exercise which the wife of no Liberal politician could afford to forgo if she valued her husband's prospects. The money of those Bradford Congregationalists – upwards of £500 promised by the Salts between 1869 and 1872 – was contributing to the building of Emmanuel Congregational Church in Cambridge of which Bernard Manning became the historian and a notable member; no heathen temple this, rather thirteenth-century Gothic, in name and style witness to that presence craved by Lady Frederick. Even the whimsical jaunt of August 1921 to a Brethren's Room near Birchington had a certain logic. It would not have seemed outlandish to Evelyn Waugh's Plymouth Brother great-great-uncle, Philip Henry Gosse; and Bradford and Cambridge Congregationalists alike had their missionary horizons defined for generations by the London Missionary Society of which Evelyn Waugh's Presbyterian great-great-grandfather, Alexander Waugh, had been a founder.

Random quotation from the literary remains of the educated classes can thus be made to reveal the surprising connectedness of the industrial world's first pluralist society. This balance of connexion with separation is set in sharper relief by the content of the quotations as opposed to their context. Evelyn Waugh giggled at the other world revealed to him in Kent; Lucy Cavendish, altogether a more serious person, was no less surprised fifty years earlier at the alien revelation in Airedale of a world which perhaps she thought she knew something about. Here surely is that Offa's Dyke which had cut through English society, its religion, politics, and culture, since the Restoration if not the Reformation? Here are the Nonconformist Conscience, this-worldly at Bradford, and the Protestant underground, other-worldly at Birchington, over and against the catholic values of the Lancing College boy or a famous Prime Minister's favourite niece. Yet here too there is connexion, for is there not more in common between the Birchington Brethren and the Holker parishioners, or between the churchly sentiment of Lady Fredrick and Bernard Manning, than between Manning and his fellow Dissenters in Birchington, or any of them and the heathen temple at Saltaire?



1 *Interior: Elmers End Congregational (now United Reformed) Church, as it was in the 1930s. H. G. Ibberson architect (courtesy of Elmers End United Reformed Church)*

Variety is comprehensive as well as divisive, and it is seldom coterminous with the bounds of sect, social class, or generation. The denominational historian now accepts as commonplace that he must also be a historian of politics, the arts and society. As he charts movement (a less loaded word than ‘development’ or ‘progress’) within his chosen denomination he knows that he must allow for, and somehow record, a range of differing rhythms. He has to demonstrate the internal logic of his study, effect following from each cause; but he has also to weave in the effects following from external causes, and then he has to explain how those ‘external’ effects interact with the ‘internal’, to produce fresh chains of cause and effect, no less peculiar to his denomination, yet frequently at variance with what had gone before. He has to record how the infinitely variable light and shade within one denomination at any moment differs from the infinitely variable light and shade within another, even though both denominations contain similar people subject to similar influences: similar, but never the same. When, in 1961, the lozenge-shaped window panes of the 1728 Presbyterian Meeting House at Aston Tirrold, in Berkshire, gave way to modern, rectangular window panes, a worshipper complained: ‘They’re not Presbyterian windows, they’re Baptist ones.’<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> F. McDonald, *Monument to Faith: a History of the United Reformed Church, Aston Tirrold, Oxfordshire* (Aston Tirrold, 1978), p. 9. Since the reorganization of local government in 1974, Aston Tirrold has been in Oxfordshire.

By 1961 the Aston Tirrold Presbyterians had, most of them, been reared in different religious traditions far from the village. Nonetheless, that comment from the back pews was not just an expression of exasperated reaction. Those Berkshire Presbyterians *were* different from Berkshire Baptists, in ways which had been developing ever since 1728 when their chapel building first defined their community and its worship.

To return to the opening quotations. Each is suggestive of a community, its worship, and its setting: the shabby friendly Kent room with its dozen brethren (or apostles?); the unaccountably neglected Lancashire parish church and its uncatholic people; the redundant Lincoln parish church, filled notwithstanding by memory and private prayer, the thriving Yorkshire temple, all bustle, industry and singers. There is an interaction of people and building, each defining the other. There is also an interaction of external factors and internal logic. The great chapel at Saltaire was demonstrably Congregational in its arrangements; so was the new Emmanuel Church at Cambridge. But with its chime of bells, Corinthian portico, domed clock-tower, grand approach, its ormolu chandeliers, solid oak benches, central aisle, and pilasters 'like polished malachite',<sup>7</sup> Saltaire was also demonstrably the product of an industrial society in which the balance of power was shifting; so, at one remove, was the new church at Cambridge, its heavy tower intervening between the University Press and Peterhouse, dwarfing Pembroke opposite and the parish church next door. The worshippers at Saltaire, as at Emmanuel, were thereafter victims as well as beneficiaries of these visible expressions of the shift in the balance of power, which was bringing them so successfully into the mainstreams of national life that their continued separate existence demonstrated more forcibly than ever how peripheral their sub-culture had become.

There is a further interaction to be gleaned from the quotations. Bernard Manning's appreciation of parish churches was natural to a Cambridge historian with a late medieval specialism, but it was also natural to his understanding of Congregational churchmanship: his sense of place, people and purpose – the place of God and the people of God, to worship God in word and also in sacrament. Had Manning been Lady Frederick he would not have found the little church at Holker horrible; he might indeed have discerned catholic virtues where she had perceived only a mean and selfish solitariness, but he would have been profoundly uneasy.

<sup>7</sup> R. Balgarnie, *Sir Titus Salt, Baronet: His Life and Its Lessons* (Settle, 1970, repr. of 1877 ed.), p. 141.

For between the 1870s and the 1930s, but especially from the turn of the century, there had been in Free Church circles a renewed consciousness of the catholic dimension of their churchmanship. In part this was the effect of decades of worship in suggestive buildings; in part it was the effect of contemporary cultural attitudes. To a degree these changes were cosmetic, but they were also part of the internal logic of the Free Churches and there was a conscious, sometimes a self-conscious, attempt, natural at a time of increasingly sophisticated historical enquiry, to unite such sentiments with the Puritan tradition, thence back, purified further, to primary Christianity. This catholic consciousness was at once native to the Free Churches, and grafted on to them by fashion and circumstance. Once identified, however mixed its origin, it bred its own momentum. Nowhere merely cosmetic or purely indigenous, it depended on a variable blend of theological training, aesthetic caprice, lay and ministerial personality, and material resources. It is the purpose of the rest of this paper to trace something of this, particularly among Congregationalists.

Lady Frederick's visit to Saltaire coincided with an important stage in the transformation of the English political, administrative, legal and educational systems. Not merely were the political classes in process of rapid enlargement but the options open to them were also being rapidly enlarged. For Nonconformists the most signal development was the transformation of their artisan core into the lower middle classes. Hardly less significant, although perhaps more precarious, was their share of the growing professional classes.

Mark Girouard has agreeably described how:

A distinctive feature of the later nineteenth century is the great band of thoroughly gentlemanly and 'nice' people, shading imperceptibly from the middle to the upper classes and living pleasantly on pleasantly adequate incomes in a pleasant world of tennis parties and dances and summers at the seaside. Within this world was an equally distinctive inner world of people who were artistic and progressive as well as nice... This inner world also shaded from the upper to the middle classes...<sup>8</sup>

These gentlemanly, nice people were the offspring of commercial or industrial men, successful building contractors perhaps, or lesser Titus Salts, refined and disciplined by that middle-class and public school system which was one of the more radical Victorian successes, constrained to retain their conscience with taste superadded. Their disciplined refinement was reflected in the variable but intensely domestic Queen Anne style which grew out of the Gothic Revival.

<sup>8</sup> M. Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900* (Oxford, 1977), p. 9.

Here we come to a parallel with the relationship of Free Churchmen to catholic values, for although first instant Gothic and then instant Queen Anne seized hold of popular taste as the whim of one generation gave way to the fancy of the next, a profounder reason for their success was that both styles were at once functional and traditional, truly vernacular. Gothic reflected the honest marriage of form and purpose in its grouping of wall and window, roof and chimney. Queen Anne extended this marriage on a more domestic, more painterly, scale into garden and surrounding landscape, its houses reflecting the growing complexities of a subtly graded society, hierarchy at odds with class. On the one hand, consequent upon the English system of primogeniture, there was the need for 'a smaller kind of house that was nevertheless recognizably of good family';<sup>9</sup> on the other hand there was a reflection of capitalists values. The bay windows by which the Queen Anne 'square brick box ...was increasingly folded and facetted' were the symbols of private, familial, domesticity communicating with the world outside, tentatively merging with it, grouping reticently with more boxed and bayed symbols into that other radical Victorian success, the English suburb, that curiously easy conjunction of the private and the communal, 'living parable of free thought and free trade,'<sup>10</sup> the Manchester School come to Hampstead, or, rather, to bring the point home, to Eton College's Hampstead estates.

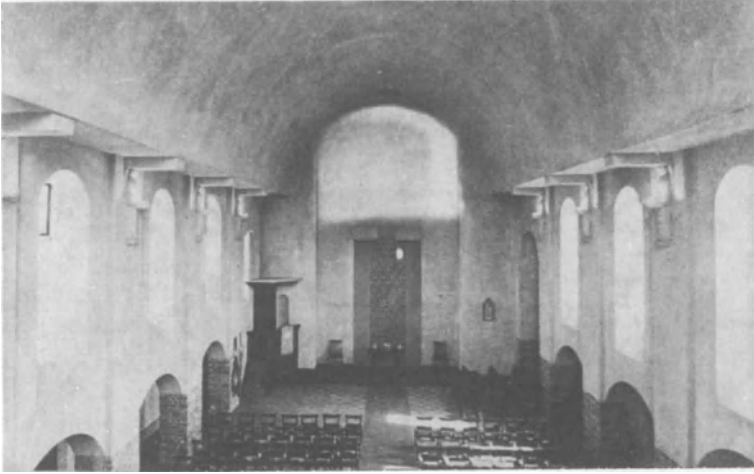
It is tempting to identify such values with Nonconformist, or at least Puritan, values. Certainly there are suggestive connexions. C. F. A. Voysey (1857-1941), prophet of the English house, theistic offspring of an increasingly anguished, decreasingly Anglican parsonage, attributed his temperament to his seventeenth-century Presbyterian Annesley ancestors and his eighteenth-century Methodist Wesley connexions.<sup>11</sup> Norman Shaw's most consistent building contractor, John Grover, was a Congregationalist with interests in Hindhead, that alpine Surrey preserve for the *haute société bourgeoise*. Shaw's most interesting client, Frederick White, a cultivated Anglican cement manufacturer with his Queen Anne mansion in Queen's Gate, was the product of a Dissenting boarding-school and a Congregational family.<sup>12</sup> J. J. Stevenson, an early practitioner of Queen Anne,

<sup>9</sup> N. Taylor, *The Village in the City* (London, 1973), p. 38.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 36, 39.

<sup>11</sup> Voysey descended from a sister of John and Charles Wesley, see *Dictionary of National Biography* s.v. Voysey, Charles Francis Annesley. I am also grateful to Miss Elisabeth Voysey for further elucidation of the Voysey ancestry.

<sup>12</sup> For Grover see C. Binfield, 'Richard Norman Shaw, 1831-1912: a Congregational Footnote', *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society*, 1 (10-08-1977), 285. For F. White see C. Binfield, 'Richard Norman Shaw, a Further Note',



2 Interior: *Elmers End Congregational (now United Reformed) Church*, as it was in the 1930s. *H. G. Ibberson architect (courtesy of Elmers End United Reformed Church)*

whose condemnation of Gothic bore graphic testimony to the gentling of a generation, had been intended for the Free Presbyterian ministry. The Beales, Philip Webb's rich solicitor clients at Standen, in Sussex, descended proudly from Oliver Cromwell. Harold Peto, Ernest George's partner amidst the opulent Rhenish-Dutch villas of Kensington and Sloane Square, was the son of the Baptist magnifico, Sir Morton Peto. All witness to the serious side of Girouard's nice gentlemen who, sitting on school boards and local councils, founding coffee taverns and free libraries, were no less 'likely to endeavour to bring the country into the city, by creating parks or planting trees, and to keep the city out of the country by preserving common and open spaces.'<sup>13</sup> Secure in the base provided by the fruits of industrial

*Ibid.*, II (3-4-1979), 79. The school was Mill Hill, the family's origins were Dutch (Witte), and uncle Edward White, was Chairman of the Congregational Union in 1886.

<sup>13</sup> See also A. Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (Yale, 1976), *passim*. Girouard, *Sweetness and Light*, pp. 5-7. For Stevenson's view that Gothic 'lent itself with fatal facility to the expression of loudness, vulgarity, obtrusiveness and sensationalism more objectionable by far than the dreariest classic of Gower or Wimpole Street' see Girouard, *Ibid.*, 13. For Standen and the Beales see M. Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 168-71, and [A. Grogan] *Standen, Sussex*, (The National Trust, 1977), *passim*. For Peto see N. Cooper, *The Opulent Eye. Late Victorian and Edwardian Taste in Interior Design* (New York, 1976), p. 28. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first qualified English woman doctor and a member of the first London School Board, was married to a cousin of J. J. Stevenson.

society, they sought to identify with the values of the previous society, their houses more rural than any country-house had ever been, now that they were merely houses-in-the-country.

This might amount to no more than a collection of names that happen to have Nonconformist associations. That there is more to it, might be suggested by a development in chapel architecture and the churchmanship which it housed running parallel to these domestic developments. High Victorian Dissenting Gothic, starved and spindly, up too Early to be truly English, gave way increasingly to a bold and flexible Gothic Free Style, fit for a Free Church, sometimes indeed to an ecclesiastical Queen Anne, marrying architectural honesty to a Puritan identity, for ministers who consciously proclaimed their values to people happy to comprehend them.

A recent secular commentator has found the painterly qualities of the true vernacular even in Saltaire:

the terrace houses, with their continuous rhythm of round-headed arches over doors and windows, underneath broad eaves on brackets, are a cross between the rue de Rivoli and an ideal Quattrocento city of Tuscany, of the kind depicted in the background of paintings by della Francesca or Veneziano; while at the same time they have the down-to-earth practicality of the nearby hill villages such as Baildon or the Bronte's Haworth.<sup>14</sup>

That is not quite how Saltaire struck contemporary observers, who were more impressed by its cleanliness, efficiency and completeness. There is little evidence that that is how it moved its creators, Salt himself, Fairbairn the engineer, Mawson and Lockwood the architects, Quattrocento though their work could occasionally be. Yet Saltaire might, not too fancifully, be adduced in aid of a broadened, re-found Puritan aesthetic. Recently the poet, Donald Davie, English Baptist turned American Episcopalian, has celebrated the Puritan aesthetic as expressed in worship:

From the architecture, from church furnishings, from the congregational music form the Geneva gown of the pastor himself, everything breathes *simplicity, sobriety, and measure*... Art is measure, is exclusion; is therefore simplicity (hard-earned), is sobriety, tense with all the extravagances that it has been tempted by and has denied itself.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Taylor, *Village in the City*, p. 65.

<sup>15</sup> Davie continues: 'And so, ...we encounter time and again the question, when faced with a Calvinist occasion: Do we have here a denial of sensuous pleasure, or do we not rather have sensuous pleasure deployed with an unusually frugal, and therefore exquisite, fastidiousness? It is peculiarly of the nature of Puritan art to pose just this question...' D. Davie, *A Gathered Church. The Literature of the English Dissenting Interest 1800-1930* (New York, 1978), pp. 25-6.

The tendency of such art is inward, private. In public it takes refuge in the oratorio, or the *conversazione*, both essentially family occasions. Stuart Hampshire, in a passing comment, has placed that inward simplicity, sobriety and measure in a domestic setting:

Family prayers, Bible reading, the practice of the piano, the discussion of poetry and of romantic fiction among friends, form a culture of privacy, which encourages the kind of inner freedom of which an independent gentleman and citizen is proud.<sup>16</sup>

But it is clear that in the later nineteenth century there was a widening of the Puritan aesthetic. David Martin, the sociologist, and a Methodist turned Anglican, in an examination of the 'potent conjunction' of feelings for the natural world, for sounds, and for the Christian religion, is suggestive in this respect, with a particular concern for music. He describes how the ancient 'dissociation of sensibility' which had developed between Puritan and Catholic aesthetics was slowly healed as the relation of the part to the whole, the Puritan to the Catholic, was re-found. The coincidence of the revival of Dissent and the industrialization of Britain coloured the natural equation of Puritanism and capitalism. In conscious reaction, sections of the English Church turned backwards to medievalism or forwards to socialism. Frequently they united the two. Musically – though parallels might be made elsewhere in the arts – there developed 'a counterpoise out of the democratic world of the choral society'. There was a gravitational shift

towards more complex musical forms and more Catholic kinds of feeling... Protestant choralism extended its range... 'Ding Dong merrily on high' joined forces with 'Hark the herald angels sing'; Vaughan Williams wrote the 'G. Minor Mass' and 'The Pilgrim's Progress'; and alongside the Victorian ballad appeared English art song.<sup>17</sup>

There was not so much an equipoise between the two aesthetics as an intermingling.

The suggestions of Donald Davie and David Martin are given weight by a consideration of two late Victorian apologists, P. T. Forsyth (1848-1921), who anticipated Davie with his description of art as 'bridled emotion..., passion working under law,' and R. F.

<sup>16</sup> S. Hampshire, 'Private pleasures and the public purse', Review of Janet Minikan's *The Nationalization of Culture* (London, 1977), in *Times Literary Supplement*, (13-5-1977), p. 578.

<sup>17</sup> D. Martin, 'The Sound of England', *P. N. Review* (formerly *Poetry Nation*) VIII no. 4 (1978), 9-10.

Horton (1855-1934), whom an American described as Matthew Arnold turned Salvation Army captain.<sup>18</sup>

Forsyth who had previously ministered for seven years at Emmanuel Church, Cambridge, was principal from 1901 to 1921 of Hackney College, the London theological college recently moved to the Finchley Road, on the western edge of Hampstead. There the college stood amidst thoroughfares whose names convey the essence of Edwardian civilization: Parsifal Road, Kidderpore Avenue – this last containing Annesley Lodge, built by Voysey for his heretical father, Horton, who had been an Oxford contemporary of Oscar Wilde, came from a fellowship at New College (the first to be held by a Dissenting minister since Cromwell's day) to minister at Lyndhurst Road Congregational Church, further into Hampstead. His pastorate there lasted from 1880 to 1930.

It is hard to overestimate the twin influences in Victorian England of the popular preacher and the college principal, personality fusing communicator and hearers, thought at the mercy of accent, the preacher vulgarizing the message, the teacher refining it, both of them dependent for their power on the extent to which they know that they will be misknown. Lyndhurst Road Church was mauve brick Alfred Waterhouse rather than red brick Queen Anne, although its scale and texture fitted into the context of a Queen Anne suburb. There was a fine collection of Dutch Renaissance villas across the way in Hampstead Hill Gardens, with more to come at the other end of Lyndhurst Road, on to Fitzjohn's Avenue, and a good Norman Shaw house adjacent in Netherhall Gardens. Shaw himself lived in Ellerdale Road; Kate Greenaway of Froggnal. The church's congregation reflected this at a suitable remove: professional families like the Curwens, related to the musical publishers, or the Powells, of whom one had married George MacDonald, the poet and novelist; the families of Stephen Spender the poet, Clifford and Arnold Bax the playwright and composer, Frank Salisbury the artist, literature shading smoothly into the higher journalism, painting too easily into the board-room portrait. Carefully placed at the junction with Rosslyn Hill, the church was also in the tradition of the great preaching centres, with a membership of over 1000 and an influence, via the casual sermon-taster or the religious press, which was nation-wide.

Horton and Forsyth were cultivated men with large libraries and a vividly communicated sense of the visual, particularly its moral

<sup>18</sup> P. T. Forsyth, *Christ on Parnassus: Lectures on Art, Ethic, and Theology* (London, 1959<sup>2</sup>), p. 16 [hereafter *Parnassus*]; A. Peel and J. A. R. Marriott, *Robert Forman Horton* (London, 1937), p. 362.

dimension. The Arts had exercised Forsyth's powers of communication at least since he had heard Wagner's music at Bayreuth in 1882 and certainly since his lectures on *Religion in Recent Art*. These lectures, delivered as an English interpretation of Hegel's *Aesthetik* to Charles Rowley's Ancoats Brotherhood in 1887, the year of the seminal Manchester Exhibition, were collected in book form two years later and subsequently reissued several times.<sup>19</sup> In 1911 Forsyth returned to art lectures with *Christ on Parnassus: Lectures on Art, Ethic and Theology*. Two years earlier Horton too had written on Art, in a collection which he called *Great Issues*. While the difference between them is that between teacher and preacher, their tendency is the same. They accept, as Horton puts it, that Art is 'an inalienable accident of the human mind,' 'incorporate in humanity'.<sup>20</sup> They seek to show, as Forsyth puts it, how Art, though a bad master and judge, is yet a good servant and precious witness.<sup>21</sup>

Forsyth's is an exquisitely orchestrated work. It climbs, as it were a fugue by his beloved Bach, to end in part where it began, with a question, 'How is Art to serve the Kingdom of God', and in part with a certainty, that appreciation of the creativity of genius is a prerequisite of faith in God the Creator.<sup>22</sup> It assumes that music and poetry have a place in worship; that setting is important; and it does so with an imagery which almost outpaces the logical unfolding of theme. The effect is a liberating display of markedly Puritan tolerance, for Forsyth is at his most alluring with the Arts when he is keenest to expose their defects; with Wagnerian opera, perhaps, 'the completest form of art', or with the Gothic of the pointed arch, that 'purest, most adequate, and most congenial expression of the Christian spirit in architecture,' where the 'pent soul received a tongue'.<sup>23</sup> Such sympathy is the more persuasive from so avowed a Dissenter, his arguments peppered at helpful moments with sharp words appropriate to the age of John Clifford and Hugh Price Hughes.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> W. L. Bradley, *P. T. Forsyth: The Man and His Work* (London, 1952), pp. 40-1 and *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> R. F. Horton, *Great Issues* (London, 1909), p. 314, 318.

<sup>21</sup> Forsyth, *Parnassus*, p. IX.

<sup>22</sup> 'Faith is life's creative power. When we find our true place in His creation, we become creators also in our subordinate way. And we find our place by faith, and faith is the most creative power given to man.' *Ibid.*, 297; also pp. 293, 295-7.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 205, 176, 174.

<sup>24</sup> Thus: 'The National Gallery represents an interest as integral to the Church in its own way as the national Parliament.' *Ibid.*, x; '...the government of Israel was more nearly a Tory democracy than a free republic.' *Ibid.*, 68. 'English art is lay art. It is anti-ecclesiastical. It is free... It has religious sympathies and affinities more than convictions of faith...' *Ibid.*, 158. *A propos* the Eastern Church, liberal in theology, static in all else, 'Liberalism is not enough to keep a church liberal...' *Ibid.*, 167.

The work is in two movements, with a coda: first an exposition of Greek, Hebrew and Christian Art; next an analysis of the actual achievement and spiritual potential of painting, architecture, music and poetry, finally the Puritan synthesis.

Greek Art, so his argument runs, was an art of form and proportion rather than colour and insight, of immanence rather than urgency, lacking any sense of the infinite because it was too perfect to allow for *possibility*. Hebrew Art was discouraged, save for its expression in lyric poetry, but the Hebrew genius, with its discernment of the soul, released possibility.<sup>25</sup> Christian Art fused the two. It gave life 'a horizon in the place of a boundary'. Forsyth played skilfully on the Christian grasp of eternity to extract a full enjoyment for this-worldly things. The Christian felt 'a new right of property in this world because [he] had received the next in fee'. Music and painting had been released. So had humour, since 'to laugh divinely you must project the finite upon an infinite grace'. Christian Art, indeed, reconciled the finite with infinity:

It is the melting, flowing, significance of conjoined line, colour, and arrangement that fitly bodies forth that high travail of the finite to be taken up continually into the Infinite, of the carnal to become spiritualised, of the creature to be manifested as a Son of Eternal God.<sup>26</sup>

Forsyth revelled in the Christian possibility of his four arts. He lingered over Florentine painting, where new life began, in full flower with Giotto, culminating with Fra Angelico in the depths and possibilities of the human face.<sup>27</sup> He lingered too over sixteenth-century Italian art, when for a time heaven and earth were fused in paint before the future passed, more faithful but earthier, to the north.

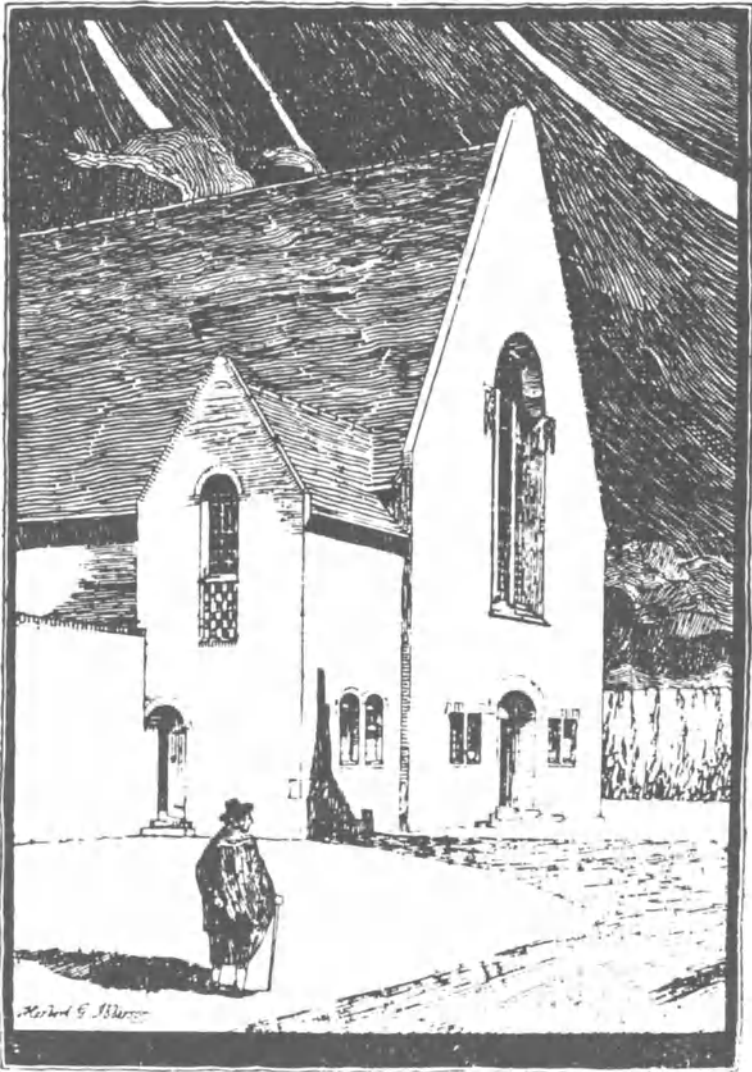
With architecture, 'stone made spiritual and musical',<sup>28</sup> Forsyth's eloquence took flight. Here was his opportunity to explore the soaring possibilities of the practical needs of Christians at worship, and how it was that 'the utilities of Christian worship precipitate[d]

<sup>25</sup> 'The Greek idealised [Nature], and dwelt on it. The Hebrews spiritualised it, and passed beyond it.' *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>26</sup> The Jews gave 'that new creative life of the soul which makes art possible... He... who by a new creation gives us eternal faith, also opens infinite possibilities to the creation of Art.' *Ibid.*, 72; also pp. 74, 75, 93, 97.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 143 ff. An eloquent, nearly contemporary, parallel enthusiasm for Giotto is to be found in Julian Huxley's *Memories*. In 1918 Huxley saw the frescoes in the Arena Chapel at Padua: '...like being inside a painted ark under God's captaincy, with Jesus and the Virgin Mary as fellow-passengers, participating with the weeping cherubs above the Crucifixion in their cosmic mourning; and spiritually I felt that I was *inside* the New Testament' J. S. Huxley, *Memories* (London, 1970), p. 116.

<sup>28</sup> Forsyth, *Parnassus*, p. 107.



3 *Elmers End Congregational Church, South London: as drawn by its architect, H. G. Ibberson (courtesy of Elmers End United Reformed Church)*

themselves by the providence of need in the form of a cross; and the Christian building [became]... the reflection of the central Christian idea'.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

The plan of the building converges towards one point in the interior – the centre of the cross. And the structure of the walls from their straight ascent curve inward to meet overhead as if to enclose the worshipper with Deity, and to symbolise in its hour of prayer the ascending but humbled and concentrated soul.<sup>30</sup>

The contradictions of Gothic fascinated him: the pointed arch ‘like two hands joined in tense perpetual prayer’, the great churches ‘chained to earth in fixed flight’, the ‘perfect equilibrium of forces and unity of antagonisms’, the peace which is ‘the solemn calm of intense movement ...Sabbatic – the rest of the Creator, whose might upheld creation even in His rest’.<sup>31</sup> Could any Puritan resist such advocacy?

From stone volatilized Forsyth turned to music, the art which exists only in the listening spirit, powerless therefore where there is no soul, ‘youngest, and most inward, and spiritual, of all the arts’, most sacramental too, for ‘the elements sink to a film, and the communion is all in all’.<sup>32</sup> So to poetry, the humorous art, freest of all, nearer than any ‘to that spirit of infinite and redeeming love which is the soul of religion’; and the reminder, and accolade, that ‘between Sophocles and Shakespeare there is the whole spiritual world of Christianity’.<sup>33</sup>

Few readers, however, could doubt the Puritan tenor of Forsyth’s argument, and no readers that of Horton. Both were the apostles of shape and discipline. For Horton true art meant form and order. He spoke of ‘the strenuous discipline necessary to high achievement’. He disparaged the 1908 Franco-British Exhibition where ‘the Casino, the boulevard, and the bathroom of women seemed the chief stock-in-trade’, where beauty was encapsuled in

A coarse, ugly, soulless woman, with brindled hair and inadequate garments... Why? When goodness fades out of the brain, when purity, love, and the excellences of the soul cease to please, what is left for art is only lust and its sickening reaction.<sup>34</sup>

Here was criticism coarsened into a sermon. Forsyth was subtler far; his advocacy was strongest where his exposure of inadequacy was clearest. One appreciated Gothic the more of its ultimate failure:

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Lincoln Cathedral... like a great eagle cowering with spread wings just in the act of taking flight’. *Ibid.*, 175, 183, 187, 188.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 197, 198, 195, 199.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 229-30, 238, 253.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Puritanism is nearer to truth and beauty than the Restoration, as even the most careless visitor to the National Portrait Gallery can see.’ Horton, *Great Issues*, p. 322, also pp. 340, 333-4.

If Christianity were an aesthetic religion, the Gothic cathedral would be its finished and perpetual type, the fit garment of a worship the most imaginative and beautiful the world knows... But Christianity[']s]... worship centres in an active Saviour... [This] seals the fate of the Gothic style. For the purposes of an evangelical Christianity, where everything turns on a preached Gospel and vernacular prayer, that style is quite inadequate.<sup>35</sup>

So too with Byzantium where religionless theology killed politics, morality and art, yet whose churches, dome atop the classic square, express imperishably the three-dimensioned Trinity worked into the unity of God.<sup>36</sup> So too with music, offering at best 'the world's order in miniature', but also, especially in Germany, inviting men

and especially women, to dwell to an enervating extent in a vague world of formless impulse, lawless emotion, vacant yearning, and impossible dreams...<sup>37</sup>

Only with the stage does Forsyth turn coy:

...I do not for a moment say that a public amuser follows an immoral vocation, but it is non-moral, and as a life-work it seems hardly in itself to contribute to ethical growth and spiritual dignity, unless special moral precautions are taken, or special spiritual grace sought.<sup>38</sup>

No doubt art, with Forsyth as with most other cultivated Puritans of the age of Watts and Browning, lay safest with poetry and painting, arts 'of the heart and the soul with all its chiaroscuro', arts expressing grouping, composition, passion, individuality, adding religion to theology, colour to form, arts for Congregational Christians gathered into churches, at once sum and part of the Church universal:

in the composition or grouping of pictorial art... you find that creative subjection and sacrifice of the part to the sum, of the individual to the whole, which is such a feature of Christian ethics and Christian creed.<sup>39</sup>

But it was Horton who gathered a Church in Hampstead; Forsyth merely trained its ministers there. It was Horton who had the surer suburban touch, when to his comforting condemnations he added practical advice, suitable to Puritan hearers drawn from an interior decorator's paradise. He pleaded for home and beauty

<sup>35</sup> Forsyth, *Parnassus*, pp. 189-191.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 164-6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 212, 208.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 287.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 105, 94-6.

in-wrought in the shape and furniture of rooms, in the outlook from windows, in the aspect of the house and garden... A flower, a fold of drapery, a patch of colour, an unexpected decoration on a door panel, a mere arrangement of lines and curves, may suffice to give distinction to a small suburban house.<sup>40</sup>

Horton was writing just when Hampstead Garden Suburb was becoming a rapid fact, its promoters religious people, its architects pioneers of the suburban home, its Central Square to contain two great churches, one State, the other Free, separated (or united?) by a great Institute.

It would seem that only religion can make a city beautiful. But art is the means which religion should employ... There must be a president beauty in the ordering and laying out of its squares and thoroughfares, of its central business houses and of its suburban dwellings... [Art is] the Gate Beautiful of the Temple. In that porch we may not linger, but we may fitly pass through it when we pray.<sup>41</sup>

Such cultural concern was natural in a society weaned for three or more generations on John Ruskin, that arch-communicator of the good and the beautiful. What needs stressing, however, is the extent to which several generations of English Nonconformists had taken such seeming externals to heart. From the 1840s a demand for new church buildings, intensified by the proliferation of well-organized denominational chapel building societies, had issued in a stream of hints on style and manuals on church architecture. Cheapness and efficiency were the keynotes, but from the first there was concern to return to primary principles, punctuated with wary, sharp glances at the Ecclesiologists.<sup>42</sup> By the 1890s manuals of Free Church principles, devotion and worship were accompanying increasingly sophisticated analyses of church architecture. When Forsyth examined the nature of the Christian *rendez-vous* (the word is his), he relied on a work of 1886, *From Schola to Cathedral*. Its author, Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849-1932), Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art at Edinburgh and one of the first generation of Oxford Nonconformist undergraduates, was the son of James Baldwin Brown, the powerfully idiosyncratic Congregationalist whose preaching in the 1870s had lured the student Forsyth each week from New College, St. John's Wood down to his

<sup>40</sup> Horton, *Great Issues*, pp. 341-2.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 342-3, 345, 347.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. [J. Blackburn] 'Remarks on Ecclesiastical Architecture as Applied to Nonconformist Chapels', *Congregational Year Book for 1847* (London, 1847), 150-63; also C. Binfield, *So down to Prayers: Studies in English Nonconformity 1780-1920* (London, 1976), pp. 145 ff.



- 4 *King's Weigh House Congregational Church, London, as it appeared in the 1950s. This shows Waterhouse's interior after the successive alterations caused by John Hunter, W. E. Orchard and the Second World War. Shorn of Orchard's more startling extravagances the Waterhouse 'boilerette' is nonetheless tamed. Today the church is used by the Ukrainian Catholics (courtesy National Monuments Record)*

church south of the river in the Brixton Road. James Cubitt, the architect of Emmanuel Church, Cambridge, where Forsyth had ministered before moving to Hackney College, wrote sensitively of the matter in *Nonconformist Church Buildings* (1892). A little later, two midland architects, Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler, reflected their successful combination of chapels with Tudorbethan suburbia in book form.<sup>43</sup> Intelligent Free Churchmen, therefore, had ample

<sup>43</sup> For James Baldwin Brown (1820-84) see Binfield, *Ibid.*, 190-9, for Gerald Baldwin Brown see *Dictionary of National Biography*, and also J. Crouch and E. Butler, *Churches, Mission Halls and Schools for Nonconformists* (Birmingham, 1901) and J. Crouch, *Puritanism and Art: An Inquiry into a Popular Fallacy* (London, 1910). But Crouch and Butler's domestic work is savaged in N. Cooper, *The Opulent Eye*, p. 39. For the general context, as well as itself being a work fitting into, and perhaps completing, the genre, see A. L. Drummond, *The Church Architecture of Protestantism* (Edinburgh, 1934).

sources when it came to fusing practicality, aesthetics and their own evolution. Unsurprisingly, and with increasing confidence, there was a catholic tone to this shift of Puritanism. Forsyth articulated it even in his demand for buildings to express revelation rather than mystery, to contain

a worship wherein all are priests, and all co-agents in the utterance of the Word to the rational conscience, the personal experience, and the moral imagination.<sup>44</sup>

‘A worship wherein all are priests, and all co-agents’. Victorian chapels were large because they were expected to contain large crowds. Therefore their atmosphere spoke to the student of crowd psychology rather than to the seeker of worship ‘wherein all are priests’. Chapel architects and a surprising number of chapel-building committees were acutely conscious of this, and strove to relate their congregations to the pulpit (or the rostrum) where the Word was spoken and to the table where in fellowship the bread was broken. For the Christian *rendez-vous* was also, at least for Baptists and Congregationalists, the place where the *Church*, that is, the fellowship of believers in *corporate membership* especially gathered. This sense of the Church was never wholly diluted by force of numbers, as might be suggested from this account in a Congregational journal of a famous London Baptist preaching centre, Dr. Clifford’s Westbourne Park:

And wedged in between ‘sinner’ and heretic, critic and doubter, and all the other motley elements of the casual crowd, are the citizens of this Zion – young people joining in the service with hearty zest, and following the lessons in their microscopic pocket Bibles; old saints, with large, well-worn books and faith-lit eyes; families united in bonds of double kinship; obscure lonely souls, members of the hidden aristocracy of whom the world is not worthy. These bring the air of the spiritual world, the aroma of mystic communion, into the hearty, bustling, garrulous atmosphere of the curious throng...<sup>45</sup>

For evidence that such churchmanship was neither entirely a matter of chance, nor sentiment, nor lingering tradition, nor personal quirk, there is a small *Primer of Congregationalism*, published in 1894 at the request of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Its author, Albert Goodrich (1840-1919), a man in the Baldwin Brown

<sup>44</sup> Forsyth, *Parnassus*, pp. 190-1.

<sup>45</sup> *The British Congregationalist* (17-8-1911), quoted in H. E. Bornsall and E. H. Robertson, *The Dream of an Ideal City: Westbourne Park 1877-1977* (York, 1978), p. 17. A leading deacon there, J. Wallis Chapman (1842-1915), in membership from 1858, was architect of several of the larger and more sophisticated Baptist church buildings, including Westbourne Park itself.

mould, progressive politically in the Social Gospel sense, was minister of Chorlton Road Congregational Church, Manchester's largest Congregational preaching centre.<sup>46</sup> The church was situated with that nice strategic sense characteristic of the Victorian Free Churches between the villas of professional men and the terraces of the lower middle classes. It was the Congregational church nearest to the Lancashire Independent College. Goodrich's *Primer* reflects this. Based upon 'lectures to his catechumen class',<sup>47</sup> its brevity, clarity and refusal to talk down to its readers, made it ideally aimed at student teachers, superior shop assistants, and attenders at University Extension Classes. Its chapters were defined 'by an attempt to approximate the order of time in church connection and spiritual life':<sup>48</sup> baptism, sin and repentance, faith and salvation, love and obedience; aids to spiritual life; then, perhaps in descending order, the Church, Dissent, Congregationalism; the Lord's Supper; finally to Church membership.

There was no doubt as to the *Primer's* context. The endpapers advertised lectures commemorating the Bicentenary of 1688, and works on *The Heroic Age of Independency*, the English Separatists, the *Martyrs of Congregationalism*, all by denominational leaders. The *Primer* itself spoke sharply of the Establishment. An established church was a dishonourable church: 'when... the minister or sovereign has not been a good man, bishops have been elected simply to oblige vicious persons...' An established church was a divisive church: 'from an Established Church, which in so many ways wrongs and weakens the nation, we, as lovers of our nation, are bound to dissent.' Plain-speaking was a duty, for though members of Congregational Churches as members of the universal church should never speak disrespectfully of other churches, yet 'in the present state of the church, we best secure the victory of its army by being loyal to our own regiment and its colours'.<sup>44</sup>

This was the standard rhetoric of Edwardian Nonconformity, claiming an equal footing with all national bodies, yet defensive; self-consciously excavating its own traditions, yet consciously *au courant*.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Indeed he had been considered for the succession to Baldwin Brown at Brixton Independent Church.

<sup>47</sup> A. Goodrich, *A Primer of Congregationalism* (London, 1894), p. vi. The present writer is indebted to the late Miss K. Jarrams for alerting him to this: Miss Jarrams, conscious of her own seventeenth-century Dissenting ancestry, used the *Primer* in conducting her own Junior Church classes well into the 1970s.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, vi.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 85, 87, 138-9.

<sup>50</sup> Thus this rephrasing of old views: 'The essential idea of sin is distance from God... Whatever puts the soul at a distance from God, is sin. All ungodliness is sin... Wherever there is distance from God there is sin, though no law of God be definitely

sometimes crass, often question-begging.<sup>51</sup> Yet the rhetoric is incidental to the *Primer's* central theme which is a sense of the Church: Church as brotherhood, Church as family, Church as kingdom. Thus the chapter on baptism stresses that sacrament's ecclesiastical side: baptism

designates the person baptized... as one who being in the kingdom of God is to be taught its truth... [T]o leave the children without any formal recognition of their place in the Kingdom, postponing any such recognition till the time when, as individuals, they act for themselves, appears to be excessive individualism, altogether neglecting the great principle of solidarity...<sup>52</sup>

Goodrich played on the principle of solidarity when he dwelt on the aids to spiritual life and the sacraments:

You owe the church much, for it already has baptised and blest you... In the congregation we realize we are but one of a great body... we are redeemed from being self-centred and self-absorbed in our religion; our charity also is enlarged... The Church's sacraments compel us to exercise our faith, and her word will not suffer us to forget our duty...

In word and life, let us confess – I believe in the communion of saints.<sup>53</sup>

He also played on solidarity's family side, the quest for right relations with God and with man, 'the realization [a favourite concept] of the Brotherhood of Man in the Fatherhood of God':

Realize... the great and glorious Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God... Let... your trust and love fuse your whole self so that it may flow into, become one with Christ's life... Your life, as Christ's, towards God will be filial, and towards man, fraternal...

The church further exists *to realise the Christian brotherhood*...<sup>54</sup>

At this point, with Word and Sacraments to give structure, the Church as Kingdom fuses with the Church as brotherhood into Social Gospel:

known.' *Ibid.*, 26-7. 'When we begin to realise something of the sin and misery of life we fall into wrong thoughts concerning God...' *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>51</sup> Thus: 'In its elements faith in Christ as our act is the same as we exercise in a guide, a banker, or a doctor...' *Ibid.*, 46; 'we have no complete set of precepts to meet all the different sets of circumstances of life... If we really love God and man, we shall not as a rule, be at a loss to know what the will of God is.' *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-6.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 65, 67, 68.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 44-6, 77.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 78, 80.

The Kingdom of Christ means not only the salvation of individual souls, but society regenerated and perfected... By the Word and the Sacraments the church worships, and through them it realises its brotherhood, and the Word is the prime power by which the church advances the Kingdom.<sup>55</sup>

Structure was the delicate point of Goodrich's argument as a Congregational churchman.

If you believe in Jesus Christ, if you accept Him as your Saviour and Lord, you are qualified, and you ought to join Christ's Church. No church has a right to ask more of you; Congregational churches ask no more.<sup>56</sup>

Yet why should they ask no more? Goodrich urged simply that 'Christ is present with His church to preserve it from error; we therefore think it unnecessary for a church to compel assent to any creed or articles...' Christ is present in the preached Word and, in the



- 5 *Saltire Congregational (now United Reformed) Church, Shipley, Yorks. This shows the interior of the church which Lockwood and Mawson designed in 1859 for Sir Titus Salt, as it appeared in 1970 (courtesy National Monuments Record)*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 89, 111-2.

same sense, in the Communion, that special act of the Church meeting in His name, at which He is specially present, communicating Himself, as He promised.<sup>57</sup> For Goodrich, observation of the Lord's Supper is the basic mark of the Church, the mark of Christ's special presence:

If there be no real presence of Christ there is no church, and indeed no Christianity... We believe our Congregational polity specially expresses and urges us to realise this presence of Christ. Our independency becomes self-will if we have not Christ's presence; we suffer no appeal from our church acts, simply because we believe them to be His acts... Our freedom from subscribed creeds also throws us upon the presence of Christ as the only power that can keep us as churches in the faith. If Christ withdraws from any of our churches, they have no endowments or no elaborate system to hold them together and to conceal from them the awful absence.<sup>58</sup>

It is easy to see how such arguments, boldly appropriating phrases like 'real presence', enabled an increasing number of Congregationalists to claim to be the true High Churchmen and to make the leap from Independency to the Church Universal. When his readers gathered at the Lord's Table Goodrich urged them to 'Realise, therefore, your oneness with your individual church, and with the universal church...'<sup>59</sup> It is easy too to understand the allure of such sentiments when expressed by the accomplished products of a great preaching tradition to the latest products of years of mutual improvement societies and chapel literary and debating societies. That 'allure' is not too strong a word is suggested by the case of W. E. Orchard (1877-1955), minister from 1914 to 1932 at the King's Weigh House Congregational Church, near Grosvenor Square in the West End of London.

The Weigh House, an Alfred Waterhouse 'boilerette', was the most historic of the surviving Congregational churches in central London. Orchard made it the most notorious. He was specifically invited to build up 'in the heart of the Empire... a strong Catholic Church'.<sup>60</sup> Orchard made it both that and the setting for the ordination and ministry of the first English woman Congregational minister. It is easy to dismiss Orchard as a maverick: the Presbyterian-minister-turned-Congregationalist, who became a Roman Catholic priest. His congregation can be set aside as a personal following. Great fun can be made of the panache and eclecticism of his ritual. To do this is to

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 100, 101-2.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Elaine Kaye, *The History of The King's Weigh House Church: A Chapter in the History of London* (London, 1968), p. 121.

undervalue the extraordinary power of his personality, the wit,<sup>61</sup> vigour and apostolic fervour of his sermons, and the fact that he attracted many Congregationalists who were not swept off their feet, but who found their denominational loyalty enlarged at the Weigh House.

Like Goodrich, Orchard celebrated a churchmanship frighteningly high because entirely unfettered: 'I believe in the power of the Holy Ghost to keep the Church pure without military methods, legal enactments, or external tests.'<sup>62</sup> Orchard too fused his churchmanship with Social Gospel:

The higher your Churchmanship the less reverence you can have for the State; the higher one's doctrine of the sacraments the more one is troubled about the present economic basis of society, the more absolute you make the Deity of Jesus the greater the revolution to which one is committed...<sup>63</sup>

But above all he enfolded his church into the Universal Church with a dazzling, moving effrontery which demands extensive quotation:

I regard myself as thrice a priest. I am a priest because I am a Christian... I am a priest because I have been called to lead in worship a congregation of priests. ... I am a priest of the catholic Church, for when I was called to the ministry I was called to minister... to that Body of Christ which has a priestly Head... Everything done here which could be called ceremonial is done solely for the sake of simplicity so that we may be moved together; choosing rather actions-then words, and prayers than exhortations, because that makes for simplicity.

So now I am going to get down from this exalted prophetic position and

<sup>61</sup> Thus this comments on criticism levelled at his choice of vestments: having referred to the usual Congregational celebration of Communion, with deacons flanking pastor at the Table, 'presiding like directors or other notable persons over a public meeting', he went on: - Vestments are 'simply the ancient, classical, and lay dress of early Christian times. I have been asked by an indignant person in a frock-coat which of the Apostles I thought I was imitating. My answer was, "Paul, at any rate"... They have been retained by the ministers at the Eucharist while all the world has changed its fashion; a rather beautiful piece of symbolism. If this is unbecoming that at the Eucharist, at which both sexes are present, the leader shall parade his masculinity, or set the latest fashion in men's attire, or, ... be just a generation behind... what dress is most suitable? The black gown is priestly... academic costume hardly emphasises the minister's oneness with the rest of the congregation..., a surplice is monastic and medieval. There is nothing so suitable, so simple, or so symbolic as this apostolic, primitive, and lay Eucharistic dress. And now to turn to something more important...' W. E. Orchard, 'The Priestly Sacrifice', *The New Catholicism and Other Sermons* (London, 1917), pp. 10-2.

<sup>62</sup> Orchard, 'The Church of Three Dimensions', *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>63</sup> But he was on his own when he added: 'and as a sample of the type of society proposed the Athanasian Creed should be taken as the sanction and pattern', 'The Trinity and the Social Revolution', *Ibid.*, 163.

stand upon your level, and turn your way, to enable me to forget you and you to forget me. And I do most solemnly over that my total intention has been simply to get out of your way and leave you alone with God. If I am priest, it is only by putting myself on your level, and letting my own devotion, using the hallowed forms which centuries have sanctified, help you and lead you nearer to Christ.

This throws a heavy responsibility on you. You may leave me standing there alone, and thus my priesthood will be deprived of all value, for it is the Church and the Church alone that can offer a valid Eucharist. But such responsibilities are precisely what our Free Church principles emphasize... You may make this rite an empty form, but you cannot blame the rite for that. That is your business. But in every line of it, in every action, it calls you to your sacred office. And if you are faithful, there will surge up an offering to God, which will not fail to hasten the union of Christ's Church, the evangelising of the world, the reconciliation of nations, and the coming of the Kingdom of God. And then Something will make answering response, using this bread and wine as the material link. All heaven will be brought near. Someone will touch our foreheads. Something will brush our lips. But of that it is not lawful for a man to speak.<sup>64</sup>

Despite the effrontery, perhaps because of it, that remains powerful preaching even now. It also remains a powerful exposition of the relationship between minister and people, and minister, Maker and people, in a gathered church.

Orchard was received into the Roman Catholic Church in June 1932, and into its priesthood in 1935, but the essence of his message in such sermons as 'The Priestly Sacrifice' informed the language of men who, stressing increasingly the internal, historical, Congregational logic of their position, continued to mould the future of Congregationalism. One of them was Wilton Rix (1881-1958), minister at Ealing Green, a man whose names spoke of a Puritan ancestry for whom the Ejection of 1662 was merely an incident. At the Fifth International Congregational Council, held at Bournemouth in July 1930, Rix persuaded his audience that

Youth needs a society of the real presence where Christ's sympathy with them calls forth their best, that is, Christ's own revolt against human sin and sloth will call to *their* enthusiasm for revolt...<sup>65</sup>

At the same meetings, Bernard Manning, with whom this paper began, told his hearers that 'the visible organized local church is for us the earthen vessel which carries the real presence of the Saviour', and laid

<sup>64</sup> 'The Priestly Sacrifice', *Ibid.*, 8-9, 16.

<sup>65</sup> W. E. Rix, 'The Living Church and Youth: Their Need of One Another', in *Proceedings of the Fifth International Congregational Council, Bournemouth, July 1st-8th, 1930* (ed. A. Peel, London, 1930), p. 97.

claim to 'the language of the saints of the ancient undivided Church, of the medieval Church, of the several members of the Church since the Reformation' as part of Congregationalism's own 'dialect'.<sup>66</sup> And echoing Goodrich and Orchard he too spoke of Congregationalism's special sense of churchmanship:

...Christian liberty: liberty not from the Church, but in the Church. It is the combination of liberty with the highest, fullest, most rigid churchmanship... full liberty, undiluted churchmanship.<sup>67</sup>

The tendencies which Orchard expressed so powerfully in the First World War, and which others developed more circumspectly between the Wars, were given their clearest form in the Second World War, in a booklet, *Congregationalism and the Church Catholic*, published by the denominational press and written by Nathaniel Micklem, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford. Micklem too stressed the internal logic of what he advocated, weaving the seventeenth-century Independents, John Owen and Thomas Goodwin, into his argument and adding his own testimony of childhood worship in a seventeenth-century village meeting house, 'church order... essential to its very life',<sup>68</sup> and he used Daniel Jenkins, a future minister of the Weigh House, to dot the i's of Goodrich, Orchard and Manning:

The idea of the 'Independent' Church is simply an attempt to take seriously the catholicity of the visible Church. To call a church an 'Independent' church is to say that it is a 'Catholic' church – a church, that is, which bears all the marks of the Church's catholicity upon itself...<sup>69</sup>

Micklem's booklet advanced upon the rest in its practical plea that the whole Church and not just the local church, should be organized 'on evangelical and spiritual principles' and that Congregationalism's interdependence, already weakly expressed on purely expedient (and therefore schismatical) principles, should most be expressed upon church principles. Calling John Owen to his aid, he urged the 'mutual

<sup>66</sup> B. L. Manning, 'The Place of Congregationalism in the Living Church: Our Distinctive Contribution', *Ibid.*, 259, 252.

<sup>67</sup> Manning, *Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>68</sup> 'That chapel made my religious inheritance significant and exciting. To this day I am a Congregationalist because of what that chapel stood for...', N. Micklem, *Congregationalism and the Church Catholic* (London, 1943), p. 7-8. Micklem (1888-1976) became, in retirement in the 1950s, a member of the Weigh House, of which his eldest son was Church Secretary: E. Kaye, *History of... Weigh House Church*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>69</sup> Micklem, *Congregationalism*, p. 27. D. T. Jenkins, in 1943 working for the Student Christian Movement, was minister of the Weigh House 1956-62.

communion of particular churches in spiritual synods'. Here was Congregationalism's 'answer to Rome and Canterbury... the true expression of catholicism' here, in Congregational principles truly developed, was 'not only the doctrine of the local church but also the true principle for the organisation of the whole Church catholic', for:

The end and purpose of all church order is obedience to Christ, and Congregationalism is the system whereby it is made impossible that any man or any synod should usurp the place of Christ and exercise lordship in his Church.<sup>70</sup>

It was remarkably done, for it effectively laid down the principles sustaining the United Reformed Church, the first major union in Britain since the Reformation of churches from different traditions, formed in 1972 when the Presbyterian Church of England united with most of the local churches gathered into the Congregational Church in England and Wales.

This paper began as selective history, a random quartet of quotations. It might seem that the subsequent selection of P. T. Forsyth, R. F. Horton, Albert Goodrich, W. E. Orchard, Wilton Rix, Bernard Manning and Nathaniel Micklem, a continuous span of ministry (although Manning was a layman and Horton was never ordained) from 1865, when Goodrich entered upon his first pastorate, to 1976, when Micklem died, is equally random. It might also seem that they have been used to provide convenient evidence of a denominational shift in a way which ignores the real differences of temperament, politics, indeed of theological colouring, which existed between them. In defence it may be observed that each one, lay or ordained, exercised an overlapping ministry, and that, Orchard excepted, they remained loyal to the one denomination. Each was an unparalleled communicator. Each drew upon a shared reservoir of assumptions, working on a not dissimilar education. The obvious differences – Orchard's early Presbyterianism, Forsyth's Scottish upbringing, Goodrich's provincial ministry, Micklem's assured social background – in fact heighten the similarities. If it is argued that the principals of theological colleges or the ministers of large city churches or the Fellow of a Cambridge College cannot truly represent a petty bourgeois, small-town denomination, then it may be observed that the interconnexions of these men with each other and the whole spectrum of their denomination are demonstrable, such that the continuities again outweigh the discontinuities. A minute study of local churches, to embrace all aspects of membership, ministry, and fabric, from architects to bazaar-openers, precluded from the present

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-5, 43, 68, 74.

study by reason of length, would confirm this.<sup>71</sup> The local balance may vary between 'liberal' and 'catholic', 'independent' and 'fraternal', and denominational clashes of personality may be reflected locally in secessions, but the tendencies affecting the balance were markedly similar, their variety consonant with a congregational



- 6 *Lyndhurst Road Congregational (latterly United Reformed) Church, Hampstead. Exterior of the church designed by Alfred Waterhouse for the congregation gathered by R. F. Horton between 1880 and 1930. The church is now closed (courtesy The Greater London Council Photograph Library)*

polity, their continuity with what I have called 'internal logic', as well as with the external factors with which this paper began.

There remains a further shift to be noted, requiring a return to the cultural and aesthetic context. R. F. Horton feared the sensual in art. Forsyth distrusted it, with his brisk comparison of Jesuit rococo and 'the later era of horse-hair sofas and wax flowers in the window',<sup>72</sup> and his certainty that acting was non-moral. Orchard, not surprisingly, was frankly sensual:

...Catholic worship does recognize that man is both body and soul, that the soul can be reached through the senses, and the soul must express itself through the body... It is no accident that art has reached its highest attainment through Catholic worship.<sup>73</sup>

At Ealing Green in the following decade Wilton Rix developed a wide reputation for his use of drama in church, and he extolled to the Bournemouth International Congregationalists, modern youth's interest 'in dress and in stuffs of beautiful colour and texture', and bemoaned the Protestant preference for methods of the study circle rather than the 'religious play that was made for the rank and file'.<sup>74</sup> By 1930 an increasing number of Free Churches were making very conscious use of colour, texture, drama, in their buildings as well as their worship. Nor were they all rich men's follies in the higher suburbia. In 1930 the Elmers End Congregational Church, in South East London, began to rebuild. Its initial cost was to be little more than £4000, so there was no room for chinoiserie. Nonetheless, the new building with its gentle texture of Sussex Grey Wealden Stock bricks, golden brown slates, oak doors, its deeply recessed west window flanked by Milton and Bunyan carved in Ham Hill stone, and its interior of rough yellow plaster under a barrel vault, illumined by bowls of light upheld by angels, was the perfect expression of Forsyth's 'bridled emotion'.<sup>75</sup>

The building's intention was charmingly explained by the architect, H. G. Ibberson, in a brochure which at once displayed his understanding of Free Church needs and his own cultural conditioning.<sup>76</sup> A

<sup>71</sup> The present writer is currently engaged on a study of a group of London suburban churches, and others, which bears this out.

<sup>72</sup> Forsyth, *Parnassus*, p. 176.

<sup>73</sup> Orchard, *New Catholicism*, p. 147.

<sup>74</sup> Rix, 'Living Church', pp. 96-7.

<sup>75</sup> Miss Dorothy Gardner to writer, 20 January 1979. *Congregational Year Book* (London, 1931), p. 211. The stone was laid in September 1930, the building was opened in 1931.

<sup>76</sup> Herbert George Ibberson (1866-1935) had trained under the noted church architects, Belcher and Sedding. The number of his commissions with Free Church

church was required 'in which people can speak, hear and see well, be comfortable – and... be attuned to appreciate things spiritual'.

At Elmers End I am sure people can see – the church is light, and there are no pillars in the way – and I think they can speak, sing and hear well. But I am sure they won't all be comfortable. Comfort depends on heating and ventilation, and on the question of warmth and density of air men differ as they do on the less important matters of theology...<sup>77</sup>

and Ibberson urged the opening of windows the moment the minister left the pulpit, to 'let the winds of heaven rush through and so avoid the feeling of froustiness which is I am afraid associated in the minds of the ungodly with organised religion'. He then described the interior, built extra high at the committee's request, 'almost violent in its stark austerity' and yet 'cheerful, even gay'.

I hope no one will be offended by the central and honourable position of the communion table, under its canopy of blue and gold. I understand that a time of silence is a part of the service at Elmer's End, and in silence (unlike in sermon time), one's mind is apt to wander. Will not the 'holy table' reminding us of our Lord's life and death and abiding presence, help more to devoutness than the most resplendent organ pipes? And then on 'Communion Sunday' let the table be brought down from its high place, cover the cloth of gold with plain linen, gather around it as a family in simple fellowship and remembrance, and so by the very change of position emphasize our Protestant Faith.

I hope none will be offended at the little Latin on the 'tester'. I know Latin has a sinister suggestion, calling up obscurantism and cruel things. But it's a fine sonorous tongue, it's dead, so it can never die or be corrupted, even by America. And it is the only universal tongue. If a Briton [sic] peasant peddling onions looks through an open door, he will understand – and the Italian organ grinder, or the Bavarian cornet player in a German band, and the public school boy from – anywhere. All will know what 'Jesus Hominum Salvator' means...

Outside the gable stands up high among the friendly little houses... Bunyan and Milton guard the Free Church (Congregational) principles. The symbol of the Church invisible stands in the great window, a Cross, vacant and made joyous with gold for 'He is risen'.

In 1871 Lady Frederick Cavendish visited Saltaire, the Yorkshire model estate created by an industrialist. In 1931 Elmers End contained one of the model estates created by the London County Council.

connexions suggests that at least his origins were Free Church: he was perhaps a Christian Scientist. *The Builder* (21-06-1935), 1142; the Royal Institute of British Architects has a Biographical Record on Ibberson which may be consulted in the Institute's Library. I am indebted to Mr. R. H. Kamen for these references.

<sup>77</sup> *Brochure* for the proposed Elmers End Congregational Church (s.l., s.a). I am indebted for this to Miss D. Gardner.

Saltaire's Congregational Church struck an intelligent Anglican woman as a heathen temple; she would have approved Elmers End's Congregational Church, had she been alive to join the Breton peasant, the Italian organ-grinder, the Bavarian cornet player, the public schoolboy, or even the Welsh peasant woman fancifully included by the architect in his line drawing for the small Free Church amidst the council houses and speculative building south east of the Crystal Palace District Cemetery and the Sewage Works.

## 9. 'Verzuiling': A Confessional Road to Secularization. Emancipation and the Decline of Political Catholicism, 1920-1970.

J. BANK

THE term *verzuiling* is widely used by sociologists and political scientists to describe the division of Dutch society and political life into vertical sections or *zuilen* (literally pillars). It therefore seems legitimate to adopt the term in this essay and so acquaint the reader with a key concept in Dutch sociology.

The Dutch cosmos is commonly considered to have been supported for more than fifty years by four *zuilen*, each representing a particular denominational or political group. As these have together preserved the precarious social equilibrium, *verzuiling* is widely credited with having brought stability to a society which is otherwise divided by contradictions and antagonisms. In all there are four pillars: three of these – the orthodox Calvinist, the Roman Catholic and Socialist *zuilen* – have a definite confessional or political character, but the remaining *zuil*, usually referred to as the 'general' or 'liberal' *zuil*, should be regarded as an *omnium gatherum*, which owes its existence to the presence of the others. The Protestants, or more precisely the strict Calvinists among them, the Catholics and the Socialists have in turn withdrawn from a society dominated by liberal values. During the latter half of the nineteenth century they tried to entrench themselves within their own political and social organizations, with their own particular religious or political ideology. Dutchmen of a liberal persuasion, as well as those who espoused a liberal Christianity, were obliged to form themselves into a *zuil* despite their distaste for mixing politics with religion and their dislike for institutions which perpetuated parochialism in politics.

How is this curious phenomenon to be explained? By the middle of the nineteenth century – when *verzuiling* was still in its infancy – Dutch society and economy lagged behind most of Western Europe, and especially behind neighbouring Belgium. In general, economic life in the Netherlands was so hidebound by tradition that Dutch merchants still dreamt of the revival of the old staple market. Once

commerce had shaken itself free from these restraints and the tenets of free-trade had gained acceptance, the Dutch economy gradually expanded, thanks in part to the industrialization of other European countries. In the Netherlands the 1880s witnessed the 'take-off' into industrialization and sustained economic growth.

This process of economic modernization was accompanied by an extension of the tasks and functions assumed by the national government and the provincial and municipal administrations. According to the liberal ideal individual members of society were responsible for the wealth and welfare of the nation. Yet this did not prevent liberal cabinets of the 1860s from increasing the power of the central government and from promoting and subsidizing public works. By the end of the century the Dutch state, instead of playing a diminishing role in Dutch society, was in fact greatly extending its activities, as may be seen by the fourfold increase in government expenditure between 1850 and 1900. This increase in government expenditure is attributable less to the needs of defence or internal security than to the growing demands for those services and institutions which no individual could or would supply, but without which modern society could not properly function – public utilities, schools and, finally, social legislation. As one political scientist has remarked: 'It appears to have been the irony of fate that State intervention has made greater progress in those fields where, in compliance with Liberalist fundamentals, it ought to have become superfluous.'<sup>1</sup>

The consequences of greater state interference in schooling served notice on the Churches that the process of centralization by a secular state would eventually confine their role to strictly religious matters. Of course, the orthodox Calvinists refused to accept that the Church's authority should be restricted in this way by the development of the modern State and their political representatives ranged themselves with the conservatives. However orthodoxy in the Dutch Reformed Church was then in retreat before the modernist theology taught in the divinity faculties and adopted by the upper class members in the consistories. The orthodox Calvinists looked on the constitutional state as an abomination of the French Revolution, which was regarded by them as the embodiment of unbelief. But when in the late 1860s Abraham Kuiper, who was then a young minister, began to campaign on behalf of political Calvinism, he struck a different note. His starting point was conventional: like his predecessors he affirmed that Christianity stood in irreconcilable opposition to Liberalism

<sup>1</sup> P. E. Kraemer, *The Societal State. The Modern Osmosis of State and Society as presenting itself in the Netherlands in particular. A Case Study of a General Trend* (Meppel, 1966), pp. 48-9.

and the modern State – this was the key to his well-known doctrine of the antithesis. But whereas this theory had not previously borne political fruit, Kuyper himself was able to make a more creative response. In society, in the state and even within the Dutch Reformed Church he began setting up his own associations, his own political party, his own comprehensive system of education from primary school to the Free University, and, in the end, his own Church. The antithesis, originally directed against modernism, blossomed into a doctrine of plurality and diversity.

Starting as mild young romantic, Kuyper became ‘a great fighter with rigid principles, a dictatorial ruler in his own tiny empire, who even outside it wore the king’s mantle and used a strangely pompous but imaginatively ornamental style of writing and speech’.<sup>2</sup> His most ardent supporters were recruited from the artisans of pre-industrial Holland, the *kleine luyden*, the small men, as they were called. Under the guidance of Kuyper they started to exercise their right to call to the pulpit ministers and to elect to the consistory elders and deacons who shared their convictions. They could take the initiative because the new *Algemeen Reglement* (General Order) of the Reformed Church, which had been passed in 1852 though introduced as late as 1867, conferred these rights on the *kiescolleges* (electoral committees) of the local congregations. They voted for orthodox elders against the wishes of modernist and liberal-minded ministers. This orthodoxy was most strongly entrenched in certain well-defined regions of the country, where the Calvinist elders had resisted the modernism, emanating from the nation’s cultural centres, but even in some consistories in the large towns, for example Amsterdam, a majority in favour of the new orthodoxy could be found. With the support of some Calvinist aristocrats and the rank and file artisans and taking as its slogan ‘sovereignty in one’s own sphere’, Kuyper built up his institutions, which provided the basis for the first Dutch political party, the *Antirevolutionaire Partij* (Anti-Revolutionary Party), and allowed the adaptation of modern institutions in a conservative sense. Under Kuyper’s leadership new issues, such as social legislation and trade unions, became topics for discussion in the neo-Calvinist movement.

When Kuyper eventually decided in 1886 to form his own church, fewer people joined him than he had expected. Nevertheless the newly founded *Gereformeerde Kerk* (i.e. orthodox Reformed Church) comprised seven per cent of the population by 1899 according to the census held that year. At that time almost half the population still

<sup>2</sup> E. H. Kossmann, *The Low Countries, 1780-1940* (Oxford, 1978), p. 303.

belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church and Kuyper could also count on substantial support in that quarter.

About 35 per cent of the Dutch people then subscribed to Roman Catholicism. Historically they had formed a numerical minority since the mid-seventeenth century, and a political and cultural minority since the Dutch revolt. To the extent that Catholics possessed the franchise, they supported the Liberals because these promised to bring about the final separation of the Dutch State and the Reformed Church and to guarantee the equality of all citizens before the law. It was this alliance of Liberal and Catholic deputies that made possible the liberal constitution of 1848. As a result the Roman Catholic Church was able to arrange for the restoration of the hierarchy, free from state interference. In March 1853 the Pope promulgated a *breve* in which he announced the creation of an archbishopric at Utrecht and bishoprics at Haarlem, 's-Hertogenbosch, Breda and Roermond. The Protestant protest against what was considered interference by the papacy in the spiritual life of a Protestant country brought down the liberal government, though the 'Papist-Thorbeckian' alliance, as it was called after the outstanding Liberal statesman, endured until the end of the 1860s.

But when Pius IX condemned Liberalism in his *Syllabus Errorum* (1864), Dutch Catholics were forced to forsake their liberal allies of 1848. In 1868 the Dutch bishops declared in their pastoral address that the Church could not tolerate the religious neutrality of the state schools. Not all Dutch Catholics would have endorsed this policy in the immediate past. The liberal Catholic deputies were purged and their places taken by those who could more easily align themselves with the clergy. Clerical political influence was greatly assisted by the concentration of half the Roman Catholic population in the two southernmost provinces of Limburg and Noord-Brabant.<sup>3</sup> Schaepman who was responsible for the formulation of clerical aspirations was himself a priest; indeed he became in 1880 the first priest to be elected to the Dutch Parliament. He has been described as 'an indefatigable agitator and initiator quite undisturbed by doubt, his emotions as exuberant as they were conventional. He could never stop thundering about his profound love for papal Rome and for his cherished Holland'.<sup>4</sup>

Schaepman worked tirelessly for the political unification of his co-religionists, which the Catholic upper classes in the southern pro-

<sup>3</sup> T. van Tijn, 'The Party Structure of Holland and the Outer Provinces in the Nineteenth Century' in *Britain and The Netherlands IV Metropolis, Dominion and Province* (ed. J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, The Hague, 1971), p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> Kossmann, *The Low Countries*, p. 352.

vinces were still resisting in the 1880s. Eventually he succeeded, less because of his arguments than because of his sheer persistence. The existence of the Anti-Revolutionary Party provided the Catholics with an instructive example. With his Protestant counterpart Kuyper, Schaepman was able to form a coalition government of Christian Democrats in 1888 thereby ending the Liberal monopoly of power and putting into practice the principle of the antithesis. The policy pursued by the coalition was a blend of reformist and reactionary conservatism. The reformist aspect was evident in their demands for the extension of the franchise, for equal subsidies to 'free' confessional and state schools alike and for social legislation. But the coalition betrayed its reactionary character by its endeavours to restore Christian values and to revive the corporate state.<sup>5</sup> Not until 1897 did the various Catholic associations accept a common programme, based on *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and it was only when the autocratic cleric, Dr. Nolens, succeeded on Schaepman's death in 1903 that an incontestable leadership emerged. But by the 1920s the process of political integration finally gave rise to a coherent, national organization, the *Roomsche-Katholieke Staatspartij* (The Roman Catholic State Party).

By comparison with other European countries the Netherlands were slow to industrialize. The backwardness of the economy is usually considered to be the most important reason why the political consciousness of the Dutch proletariat was not aroused until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The first trade unions did not appear until 1865 and the programme of the first worker's federation in 1871 was based on leftwing liberal, rather than socialist, principles. It was only in 1878 that the concept of the class struggle was plainly formulated by the new and more militant *Sociaal-Democratische Bond* (Social Democratic League). The new socialism gained strength from the movements for universal suffrage and free thought: during the 1870s the emphasis in the latter movement gradually shifted from scientific to moral and political problems so that within a decade it was closely identified with the social revolution. In the Dutch context, socialism with its atheist cachet, became the focus for the mass of workers, who had lost touch with their faith and church on moving to the miserable slums in the industrial towns. In 1894 a number of intellectuals and workers, disenchanted with the extremism and anarchy advocated by the *Sociaal-Democratische Bond* founded the *Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiderspartij* (Social Democratic Workers' Party), which had some ideological affinity with the Social Demo-

<sup>5</sup> H. W. von der Dunk, 'Conservatism in the Netherlands' *Journal of Contemporary History*, XIII (1978), 752.

crats in Germany. In 1906 this party established a Dutch federation of labour. Both the SDAP and the federation survived the fragmentation experienced by so many socialist, anarchist and syndicalist groups at the turn of the century and they formed the basis of what should be called the socialist *zuil*. It was, however, only after the Great War that the socialist organizations were consolidated. Nonetheless the militancy of the socialist groups had greatly enlivened Dutch politics before 1914. By arousing the political consciousness of the workers at various levels, the Socialists forced the Christian parties to adopt new tactics and to mobilize their forces. For that reason Protestant and Catholic workers' associations developed alongside the Socialist unions.

# I

The system of *verzuijing* came into its own after the First World War. The preservation of neutrality and the strains of a war economy obliged the Dutch political parties to enter into a truce. During the lull they were able to reach compromises on the main issues in pre-war politics, which had been the source of *verzuijing* itself: the introduction of universal suffrage and government subsidies to the 'free' (i.e. confessional) schools. Since the left wanted universal suffrage and the confessional parties insisted on the 'free' schools being treated on an equal footing with the state schools, both sides had to make concessions, if they were to attain their different objectives. This is what happened during the period when the political struggles were suspended. This compromise was known as the Pacification because it created the framework for political collaboration on the principle of proportionality. A consociational democracy was thus born, which has been the object of continuing interest among political scientists like Lijphart, who has written stimulatingly about 'the politics of accommodation'.<sup>6</sup>

Political scientists are divided in their assessment of the dangers threatening the Dutch state at this time and consequently in their interpretation of the Pacification achieved in 1917. Daalder, in his debate with Lijphart, has emphasized that as late as 1910 none of the three main movements – Calvinist, Catholic or Socialist – had yet built up a solid and well-organized body of support among the

<sup>6</sup> A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation. Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (2nd edn., Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1975); *idem*, *Democracy in Plural Societies. A Comparative Exploration* (London and New Haven, 1977).

masses. In his view the Pacification was therefore less a response to *verzuijing* itself than to the circumstances that heralded this phenomenon. 'Only after 1917 did the various Dutch groups develop their strong networks of subcultural interest organizations'. According to Daalder, the tradition of plural democracy may be considered as the reason for the continued strength of the Dutch political system, despite the gradual development of divisive subcultures in the wake of the adoption of universal suffrage.<sup>7</sup> Lijphart who has studied consociationalism in the Low Countries, Austria and Switzerland takes a different position. He considers the *zuilen* emerging before 1917 as distinct subcultures, often with divergent interests, although he accepts that their organizational networks were greatly strengthened by the application of subcultural autonomy and proportional subsidies after 1917. 'It is in the nature of consociational democracy, at least initially, to make plural societies more thoroughly plural'.<sup>8</sup> This is confirmed by the development of many religious or political associations since then, be it a Socialist swimming organization, a Catholic club of pigeon fanciers, a Protestant travel association or a neutral football club. On a more serious plane pluralism made itself felt in the field of industrial relations with segmented organizations, and in politics with segmented parties. Moreover the four *zuilen* created their own subcultures, with their distinctive vocabularies and forms of public demonstration.

Such a plural society can be held together by a grand coalition of the leaders of all its significant segments. This form of democracy may, according to Lijphart, be contrasted with the British system, where roughly half the political leadership forms a government, with the support of a parliamentary majority, and the other half heads a substantial opposition. In the case of the Netherlands the parties representing the four *zuilen* never combined in a grand coalition, for the Socialists were deliberately excluded before 1939. However the complexion of the various cabinets was counterbalanced by comprehensive coalitions elsewhere, for example in the Social and Economic Council, which acts as a sort of economic parliament, or on important state commissions like that of 1917, or on the boards set up to advise on royal marriages (1964) and on the links between the monarchy and the aircraft industry (1976).

Another essential element in any consociational democracy, according to Lijphart, is the so-called mutual veto. This gives political protection to each minority represented in the informal grand coali-

<sup>7</sup> H. Daalder, 'The Consociational Theme', *World Politics*, XXVI (1973-4), 616.

<sup>8</sup> Lijphart, *Democracy*, p. 42.

tion and guarantees that its vital interests will not be overridden by the majority. In the Netherlands such vetoes are enforced by tacit consent. This feature is closely bound up with the principle of proportionality. This principle has won general acceptance in the Netherlands because none of the subcultures can expect to obtain an absolute majority on its own. Proportionality then becomes 'a method of allocating civil service appointments and financial resources in the form of government subsidies among the different segments. It can be contrasted with the winner-takes-all principle of unrestrained majority rule'.<sup>9</sup> This impartial system removes many of the divisive problems from the political arena and so eases the burden of government. A clear example of the proportional principle at work is provided by the settlement reached in the 1920s, after a bitter dispute, concerning the allocation of broadcasting time. Though a neutral organization had been first on the air, the government ignored its claims and decided instead to spread the time for transmissions from the two official Dutch stations between four large and one smaller broadcasting association. In this way the principle of proportionality and the autonomy of the various subcultures was preserved.

## II

The system of *verzuiling* worked effectively for fifty years, but once the equilibrium was upset by the erosion of one of the four *zuilen*, it ceased to function. The collapse of the system can be attributed to a variety of causes, but the most important is surely the final achievement of Catholic emancipation and the breakdown of the Catholic *zuil*. Large numbers who had previously been loyal to the *zuil* began voting for other political parties. This explains why since 1967 there have been unprecedentedly large swings in the voting patterns and why Dutch elections have become more exhilarating than ever before. Since political Catholicism has played such a crucial role in the system – it was indeed the most complete *zuil* – its historical development will repay closer scrutiny.

Dutch Catholicism in the 1920s was still scarred by its collective experience as a downtrodden minority. Since the revolt of the Netherlands they had been second-rate citizens and had been denied access to high office. The half of the Catholic population that lived in the Generaliteitslanden was ruled directly by the States General. The Catholics here were exploited economically while their culture was

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

regarded with disdain by the alien Hollanders in their midst. For Dutch Catholics the advent of the French-inspired Batavian Republic and the onset of Liberalism created a more favourable political climate. In the late nineteenth century they founded organizations which were destined to become the instruments of their emancipation, not only in a religious and political sense, but also socially and culturally.

This desire for emancipation does not of itself fully explain the development of an autonomous Catholic segment in Dutch society. The religious conditions also called for an integrated system of norms and values within a set pattern of activities. *Verzuiling* both enables a minority to preserve its culture and gain its emancipation and also arises from the religious evaluation of behaviour which is not strictly 'religious'. Moreover, Dutch Catholicism has been characterized by a stricter observance of moral regulations than is common in the Catholic Church at large. In its struggle against Calvinism, Dutch Catholicism developed a rigorous outlook, which was then reinforced by the rigorism practised by those Jansenists who seceded from the Roman Church in the eighteenth century. Dutch Catholicism more or less unconsciously adopted a Calvinist mentality.

The emancipation of the Catholics was inspired and led from the outset by the bishops and clergy. As the natural leaders of the Catholic population, they gave guidance to the rank and file on political and social issues. In a series of pastoral letters the bishops made known the teaching of the Church and condemned Liberalism, Socialism and Communism as incompatible with the Catholic view of society. The episcopate also insisted on scrutinizing the regulations of any institution wishing to call itself 'Catholic'. Once approved, a priest would be appointed as ecclesiastical adviser to the management committee and he would be able to influence the policy and decisions of the association. The cohesion of the Catholic bloc was reinforced by the network of informal connexions that existed between the managements of the various associations. An examination of the leaders of these Catholic organizations discloses a quite remarkably large number of pluralists among the officials.<sup>10</sup> It would be hard to exaggerate the cumulative impact of these confessional associations on the life of the average Catholic citizen. In the 1920s, when the system of *verzuiling* was at its most complete, we are told that a Catholic 'not only brings out his vote in accordance with party discipline, subscribes to a Catholic journal ....lets his children enjoy a purely Catholic education from the Catholic Kindergarten to the Catholic University, but also in Cathol-

<sup>10</sup> Lijphart, *Accommodation*, pp. 61-3.

ic associations sets out on a journey, assures his life, exercises the arts, sciences and sports'. An oft-quoted, albeit extreme, instance of this confessional segregation is the Catholic goat-breeders' association.<sup>11</sup> An important consequence of this vertical segmentation was however, that industrial workers, farm labourers and the middle class all belonged to one and the same political party. This was not perhaps so strange for the class structure of the Catholic bloc was virtually identical with the Dutch population as a whole.

The national censuses, usually held every ten years, have shown that since 1920 the Catholic proportion of the population has been gradually rising: in 1920 it was 35.6 per cent, ten years later 36.4 per cent and in 1947 38.5 per cent. According to the census of 1960 the Catholic population exceeded 40 per cent, though their delight at breaching this barrier was not shared in some non-Catholic circles. Eleven years later the proportion of Catholics fell slightly to 39.5 per cent. The Catholic advance was the more remarkable when we remember that during the same period the percentage of those who denied any confessional allegiance rose from 14.4 to 22.5, among whom were many one-time Catholics. The growth of the Catholic population was therefore maintained despite a considerable loss of members.<sup>12</sup> The institutions in this sector present a similarly stable impression. For example, the Catholic party has regularly received around 30 per cent of the votes cast in general elections until 1967 (with the signal exception of 1933, the first general election to be held during the Depression). However, this continuity should not be exaggerated: it was certainly not taken for granted by the Catholic Church. At every election the Catholic citizen had to be reminded of his duty to vote for the right party and much emphasis would be placed on the need both to maintain progress towards emancipation and to demonstrate one's religious orthodoxy. In fact only four out of five Catholic voters proved their political orthodoxy by voting for the Catholic party, the only exception being in the immediate postwar election, when the Catholic family was united as never before or since.

If the continuity of political Catholicism were to be maintained, then it had to fend off challenges to its authority and achieve a breakthrough. During the 1930s Italian Fascism and National Socialism both exercised some appeal among intellectuals, farmers and the

<sup>11</sup> L. J. Rogier as quoted by B. W. Schaper, 'Religious Groups and Political Parties in Contemporary Holland' in *Britain and the Netherlands I* (ed. J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, London, 1960), pp. 215-6.

<sup>12</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, *75 jaar statistiek van Nederland* (The Hague, 1975), p. 37; J. P. Kruijt, *De onkerkelijkheid in Nederland. Haar verbreiding en oorzaken. Proeve eener sociografische verklaring* (Groningen and Batavia, 1933).

lower middle class. But Catholic institutions successfully repelled this political incursion, assisted by the bishops who, in two pastoral addresses, officially condemned National Socialism as a doctrine of neo-paganism and denied Catholic Nazis access to the Holy Sacraments. The Second World War did not put an end to *verzuijing*: at most the Occupation caused the suspension of the system. Within a short period after the Liberation the pre-war leaders (or successors in the same mould) revived the traditional organizations despite the post-war chaos and the widespread desire for the *doorbraak*, i.e. political and social renewal. The monopoly of the traditional channels of communication was restored and the old sanctions were given a fresh lease of life in the hope of maintaining or even reimposing time-honoured values among the people.<sup>13</sup> In 1954 the bishops issued another pastoral letter in which they repeated their earlier condemnations of Liberalism, Socialism and Communism, although on this occasion the sanctions once used against Catholics who supported the Labour Party were not renewed.

In the light of so long a period of continuity the collapse of Catholic organizations in the 1960s is all the harder to explain. The very suddenness of the decline must puzzle the historian whose professional suspicions are aroused by any explanation that requires the introduction of some simplistic *deus ex machina*. Professor Schöffers has hinted that the reasons for the decline should be sought in the social changes that occurred in the 1950s, especially those associated with the so-called 'second Industrial Revolution' in the Netherlands.<sup>14</sup> It is my conviction that in addition to the effects of industrialization, two other long-term tendencies should be analysed: the decline in the high birthrate among Catholics and the expansion of Catholic education.

### III

The principle of educational autonomy was central to the system of *verzuijing*. In the Netherlands denominational loyalties (or their absence) usually determined the choice of school, namely state, Protestant or Catholic. Catholicism was able through its own schools and

<sup>13</sup> J. C. H. Blom, 'The Second World War and Dutch Society: Continuity and Change' in *Britain and The Netherlands VI War and Society* (ed. A. C. Duke and C. A. Tamse, The Hague, 1977), p. 242.

<sup>14</sup> I. Schöffers, 'Het politieke bestel van Nederland en maatschappelijke verandering' in *Vaderlands Verleden in Veelvoud* (ed. G. A. M. Beekelaar *et al.*, The Hague, 1975), p. 642.

colleges to transmit its particular teachings and values. In its schools the Church also possessed the instruments of socialization which accustomed an individual to accept the precepts and presuppositions of the cultural group in which he found himself. Socialization was an indispensable condition for maintaining the social control which kept the members of the *zuil* together. Of course Catholic education did more than preserve and promote the solidarity of the group: it also assisted the cause of the intellectual and cultural emancipation of the *zuil*, for through the Catholic educational system a minority would be able to reach the top of Dutch society.

As already observed, the Pacification achieved in 1917 resolved the *schoolstrijd*: in the revised Constitution the principle of equal subsidies for state and 'free' schools was adopted, though it was only finally realized when in the 1960s the State undertook to meet the full cost of the Calvinist Free University and the Catholic University at Nijmegen. Of course the impact of the educational legislation in the wake of the Pacification enabled the confessional *zuilen* to extend their network of free schools long before the 1960s, though the government could slow down the rate of their expansion for economic reasons. In 1900 Parliament passed a bill introducing compulsory education. This act together with the Primary Education Act of 1920 laid the foundation for the Catholic primary schools with their particular ethos. Still more important was the development of Catholic grammar schools and the increasing numbers of Catholic students at university. Once emancipated this *élite* minority endeavoured to raise the consciousness of their co-religionists by setting out the objectives in speeches and pamphlets.

The increase in the number of Catholics in secondary education occurred in two distinct stages. The first began about 1880 when the number of seminaries rose dramatically from 14 to 125. Almost all these were located in the southern provinces: by comparison only a handful were set up in the northern and western parts of the Netherlands. This remarkable increase was touched off by circumstances that had little to do with the Dutch Catholics themselves. Both the Third Republic and the Germany of the *Kulturkampf* were inimical to the religious orders and many of those that were found to leave settled in the Netherlands close to the German border. Here the congregations founded refugee houses which soon became permanent institutions. About this time there was also a sharp rise in the number of missionary orders coinciding with the period of colonial expansion. These, too, established seminaries in the southern Netherlands where they recruited very successfully. Between 1920 and 1940 the number of secular clergy increased by 50 per cent and in the same

period the number of religious rose by 240 per cent. The new colleges run by the religious orders attracted large numbers because they charged lower fees than the secular institutions. The seminaries chiefly educated boys from lower middle class backgrounds: small farmers, shopkeepers and clerks. Long before people were agitating for the democratization of education these Catholic schools were putting this principle into practice.<sup>15</sup>

For the Catholics in the southern provinces the seminaries and convent schools provided the most convenient sort of secondary education. Not only were these located close at hand, but they were also psychologically congenial and approachable. Amongst Catholics the expression 'op studie gaan' (literally to go to study) has long been synonymous with education at a seminary. This practice was responsible for that particularly Catholic pattern of relations, in which the priest, as the only one to have received a higher education, enjoyed an authority which reached far beyond his spiritual mission. Leadership, even in purely secular matters, was considered a clerical prerogative and this applied with equal force to education. Such clerical leadership is not uncommon elsewhere in the Catholic world; it is certainly not unique to the Church in the Netherlands. But it left an abiding mark on the first stage in the political, social and intellectual resurgence of Dutch Catholicism.

The next stage was marked by the rise of Catholic grammar schools. This took time to achieve because the emancipated minority first had to establish educational associations and train teachers before the schools could be provided with the necessary staff and supporting organization. Between 1913 and 1925 the number of Catholic grammar schools rose from 8 to 56. With the government retrenching in the 1930s the pace of expansion slackened, but after the Second World War it again accelerated and by 1956 the number of Catholic grammar schools had doubled. Since 1945 more than half of the new secondary schools in the Netherlands had been Catholic. The number of Catholic pupils rose accordingly: in 1925 these made up 14 per cent of the school population, by 1940 this had risen to 23.7 per cent and by 1956 to 33.7 per cent. A Dutch sociologist has calculated that Catholics accounted for 39 per cent of all those in secondary education (i.e. those in seminaries and state schools).<sup>16</sup> That was however still 5 per cent less than the proportion of Catholics between

<sup>15</sup> J. J. Dellepoort, *De priesterroepingen in Nederland. Proeve van een statisch-sociografische analyse* (The Hague, 1955), pp. 30-2; 41-3.

<sup>16</sup> M. A. J. M. Matthijssen, *Katholiek middelbaar onderwijs en de intellectuele emancipatie. Een sociografische facetstudie van het emancipatievraagstuk der katholieken in Nederland* (Assen, 1958), pp. 77-90.

12 and 20 in the population. Nonetheless the gap between Catholics and non-Catholics had narrowed remarkably.

In the wake of this improvement in the relative position of Catholics at school came an increase in their numbers at university. Before the Second World War their proportion of the total student population had risen gradually from 11 per cent in 1922 to 19 per cent in 1937. After the war, however, Catholics flocked to university in increasing numbers so that by the early 1960s they accounted for 32 per cent of all students. The proportion of university students from Catholic and strictly Calvinist milieus rose faster than both those drawn from other denominations and those from the traditionally more intellectual backgrounds who had 'no religion'.<sup>17</sup> But the process known to Catholic publicists as 'intellectual emancipation' is not in fact confined to Catholics: it is the consequence of a general extension, not to say explosion, of secondary education. Nevertheless it remains true that both absolutely and in relation to other segments of Dutch society the Catholics were more affected.

As a consequence the ratio of clergy to educated laity within the Catholic subculture was dramatically reversed. Given the time-honoured place of the priest in Dutch Catholic society this reversal was bound to have momentous repercussions. In the view of one Catholic sociologist, 'the priest ceases to be the virtually unique representative of an intellectual *élite*, who apart from his ordination commands respect because of his scholarly and cultural education; he ceases to be the incontestable natural leader of a Catholic community. Quite often he will have to acknowledge the intellectual and cultural superiority of some of his parishioners'. The superiority of the laity would become more marked as the number of Catholics in secondary education continued to expand. 'All this could cause such a decline in (the priest's) standing, that the necessary prerequisites for effective pastoral work – confidence and respect – will in many cases be lacking. The priest would therefore be hampered in the exercise of his spiritual leadership'.<sup>18</sup>

The pessimism pervading this conclusion was prompted by the author's wish to warn the superiors in the seminaries before it was too late. By then these might already have read another alarming forecast by the sociologist and priest Dellepoort about the recruitment of priests in the Netherlands. He concluded that after an impressive increase in the number of ordinations in the 1920s, a decline had

<sup>17</sup> P. G. Hooydonck, 'Intellectuele emancipatie van de Nederlandse katholieken in de laatste jaren', *Sociale wetenschappen* VIII (1965), 217-29.

<sup>18</sup> Matthijssen, *Katholiek middelbaar onderwijs*, p. 103.

set in shortly before the outbreak of the war. The decline was in part attributable to the relative fall in number of those wishing to be trained for the priesthood between 1930 and 1945. But a more important cause of the decline was an increase in the number of those who failed to complete their course of studies. Only half of those who began to study for the priesthood in the pre-war period were in fact ordained. By 1955 the proportion had fallen to a quarter.<sup>19</sup> Dellepoort laid the blame at the door of the grammar schools, yet he forgot that the main cause of the decline was not a fall in the number of candidates, but in the number of those who stayed the course. Dellepoort was writing in the 1950s when the number of Catholics was still increasing and *verzuijing* in the ascendant. For us the chief interest of his work lies less in the adjustments he recommended in the training offered by seminaries, than in the data he collected and the patterns he detected at a time when Catholicism was still advancing.

These forecasts are partially borne out by investigations conducted in the 1960s into the degree of commitment Catholics felt towards their denominational education. The sociologist Van Kemenade has reckoned that though a majority of Catholics continued to value the confessional school, the extent of their loyalty depended on their age and social position. For example, young Catholics set less store by it than their elders; intellectuals respected it less than rural inhabitants. Writing in 1968 he anticipated that the degree of commitment to the Catholic schools would decline still further in the near future, especially among younger and better educated Catholics.<sup>20</sup> Apparently the one-time pupils of these schools were leaving them and discarding the system of values they represented.

In addition the Catholic clergy was itself undergoing a crisis. Not only had the number of seminarists fallen to 719 in 1969 (as compared with more than three thousand in 1950), but some two hundred priests a year were leaving their ministry because of disagreements with the hierarchy or because of their wish to abandon the celibate life. Dellepoort, who foresaw that the standing of the Catholic priests would be impaired by the rising standard of educational sophistication among the laity and the greater specialization in the field of human relations, was being proved correct. Both the number and quality of the priesthood had been adversely affected. As the role and size of the clergy diminished, the position of the Catholic laity advanced. This process of laicization within Dutch Catholicism appears to

<sup>19</sup> Dellepoort, *Priesterroepingen*, p. 306.

<sup>20</sup> J. A. van Kemenade, *De katholieken en hun onderwijs. Een sociologisch onderzoek naar de betekenis van katholiek onderwijs onder ouders en docenten* (Meppel, 1968), pp. 121-36.

be one of the most important reasons for the dissolution of the Catholic *zuil*.

#### IV

For a long time the population of the Netherlands has been growing at a remarkable rate. According to the first national census, held in 1829, the population was 2½ millions. Within the next 70 years it doubled, and doubled yet again within the next 50 years so that by 1949 the Netherlands had no less than ten million inhabitants. Within the subsequent 20 years another three millions were added to the total. This exceptional increase was achieved mainly through high birth-rates. Although the birth-rate, especially after 1900, had declined considerably, it remained sufficiently high to ensure – in conjunction with a reduction in the mortality – a large surplus of births. Soon after the end of the Second World War the Netherlands had a ‘baby boom’ in common with many European countries, but the impact was greater in the Netherlands because its usual birth-rate was higher than that of any other western European country, except Portugal, outstripping even that of the Irish Republic.

The demographic development of the Netherlands seems all the more remarkable when it is compared with countries whose social and economic structure is closely similar. Denmark, for example, has a much lower birth-rate. Because it is a predominantly Lutheran country, the sociologist Van Heek has suggested that the high birth-rates in the Netherlands may be attributed to the relatively high fertility among Dutch Catholics. Van Heek has worked on the assumption that the high birth-rate is particularly influenced by religion, although he is aware that the difference between Denmark and the Netherlands is not simply one of religion. The high fertility of Dutch Catholics may be influenced in important respects by the relatively slight degree of urbanization among them and by the standing and nature of their occupations. Nevertheless, in the view of Van Heek, this does not alter the fact that religion plays an important role in explaining the difference.<sup>21</sup>

The conclusions of Van Heek have been contested by another sociologist Hofstee, who questions whether any special weight should be placed on the Catholic preference for large families, given the general decline in the birth-rate in the Netherlands since 1900. After making

<sup>21</sup> F. van Heek, *Het geboorte-niveau der nederlandse rooms-katholieken. Een demografisch-sociologische studie van een geëmancipeerde minderheidsgroep* (Leiden, 1954), *passim*.

an analysis of demographic developments in the Netherlands for a century, he came to the conclusion that religion did not decisively affect changes in the birth-rate. At most Catholicism was responsible for delaying the decline. In his opinion the lower birth-rates signify the spread of a modern dynamic pattern of culture, which is well-disposed to changes in patterns of traditional behaviour. Deliberate family planning is part and parcel of this culture. At first family planning was practised by the upper middle classes but later it was taken up by the working class as their standards of living improved and their loyalty to proletarian culture weakened.

The path followed by modernization in the Netherlands can be clearly plotted: the 'wind of change' blows from the north-west to the south-east. The decline in the birth-rate began in the northern and western provinces after 1880 when it was still rising in the South of the country. But by the 1930s the situation was changing: the rate of decline in the West appeared to subside as it was gathering momentum in the South. Once the 'baby boom' associated with the Liberation had passed, birth-rates over the whole country resumed their 1931-5 levels. The northern and western provinces now had a higher birth-rate, whereas the rate in the South showed a decline. Catholicism can be related to these developments only insofar as Dutch Catholicism was concentrated in the South.<sup>22</sup>

In fact the disagreement between the two arguments is not as marked as their authors suggest. Hofstee was chiefly concerned about the decline in the birth-rates, whereas Van Heek was interested in their size. The latter wished to test a hypothesis about the major role played by Catholic morality in encouraging high birth-rates, while Hofstee wanted to underline the longterm changes during a hundred year span. Both arguments can contribute to our understanding of the historical process of *verzuiling*.

The large family was undoubtedly held up as a noble ideal in Catholic moral teaching. 'Natural parenthood' and the procreation of numerous offspring were praised by theologians and priests as works pleasing to God. At a Catholic National Congress against Neo-Malthusianism held in 1929 a priest, noted for his eloquence, concluded his sermon by enumerating the chances of winning salvation: parents with only one child had a single chance, whereas those blessed with ten children received ten chances. Dellepoort saw in large families a potential recruiting ground for vocations to the priesthood. The morality of the large family called for opposition to birth control

<sup>22</sup> E. W. Hofstee, 'De groei van de nederlandse bevolking' in *Drift en koers. Een halve eeuw verandering in Nederland* (ed. A. N. J. den Hollander *et al.*, Assen, 1962), pp. 13-84.

and the Dutch Catholic clergy seem to have been more active in the struggle against the various forms of birth control than their counterparts in other countries. Nor did the papal encyclical *Casti Connubii* in 1930 make much difference, for it only permitted the rhythm method of birth control and then only where social and medical reasons for family limitation were pressing. From that time publications about this method of control began to appear in Catholic medical journals. But the large family still remained the Catholic ideal. In Parliament Catholic members wanted state support for the large family and in 1937 the Catholic Minister for Social Affairs introduced a bill which would have made it much harder for married women to obtain or keep employment in the public service.<sup>23</sup>

In his argument Van Heek was able to point to the remarkable disparity between the marital fertility levels of Catholics living in towns and those of comparable co-religionists in the countryside. He also investigated Catholic districts with broadly similar social and economic structures lying either side of the Dutch-Belgian and the Dutch-German borders and found that the birth-rate among Dutch Catholics was significantly higher. A German priest attributed the discrepancy to the superior moral earnestness of Dutch Catholics and a doctor mentioned the greater influence of the relatively more numerous Dutch clergy and the impact of Catholic education through the many confessional schools. A physician from Turnhout in Belgium considered that his Dutch patients lived under greater moral pressure than his countrymen and a colleague confirmed that the moral habits of Belgians and their way of life were less austere, largely because the Belgian clergy were either ignorant of birth control or preferred to remain silent on the subject.

In 1950 an enquiry was conducted into the views prospective brides had about the size of their future families: women in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague as well as half a dozen provincial towns were interviewed. More than half of those questioned intended to have fewer than three children. But among the minority who wanted larger families were many Catholics and strict Calvinists. 'The difference of views on the most desirable number of children came out most strongly when religion was taken as the starting point.'<sup>24</sup> When the women were asked whether or not they hoped to start their

<sup>23</sup> P. van Praag, *Het bevolkingsvraagstuk in Nederland. Ontwikkeling van standpunten en opvattingen, 1918-1940* (Deventer, 1976), pp. 108-9.

<sup>24</sup> A. E. Diels, *Opvattingen van ondertrouwde vrouwen omtrent de grootte van haar toekomstig gezin*, I and II, Instituut voor sociaal onderzoek van het nederlandse volk. Commissie voor het geboorte-onderzoek, Publicatie 3-4 (2 vol., Amsterdam, 1951-3).

families in the shortest possible time, the great majority of Roman Catholics and strict Calvinists answered affirmatively. Once more the religious influence was obvious, revealing again a marked difference between on the one hand Catholics and strict Calvinists and on the other women who belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church or some other denomination or who had no religious affiliations.

Some of the women interviewed were convinced that the size of the family should be left entirely in the hands of God. For this reason a few refused to answer the questions. But for other Catholic women the reasons for practising birth control were as compelling as they were for the non-Catholics: the acute housing shortage and the anxiety that a large family would prevent them from providing their children with the necessary education. Another important finding was that the women of all religious denominations, including Catholics and strict Calvinists, wanted on average smaller families than their parents had had. The desire for smaller families than the previous generation was especially marked among the Catholic women interviewed in 1950.

What happened in the 1970s could have been predicted twenty years earlier: the birth-rates among Catholics moved closer to the national average. Opposition to the different means of birth control diminished and ceased to be as effective. When in 1968 the papal encyclical *Humanae vitae* prohibited the use of certain methods of contraception, a survey showed that the great majority of Dutch Catholics (63 per cent) did not agree with the Pope on this matter. The change in moral habits among ordinary Catholics had been greatly assisted in the Netherlands by the televised sermons of Mgr. Bekkers. In these the Bishop of 's-Hertogenbosch urged his fellow Catholics to follow the dictates of their conscience and he brought to the discussion about birth control among Catholics greater prominence and frankness. By his sermons the Bishop initiated the public debate, but he was also following opinions current among his parishioners.

## V

The high Dutch birth-rates were one of the reasons for the government to launch in 1949 an ambitious programme of industrialization. The continuous growth of the population required a correspondingly increased number of new jobs, as the Minister for Economic Affairs then informed Parliament. Otherwise the Netherlands would be threatened by mass unemployment – the spectre of the 1930s – which could only be solved by mass emigration. Accordingly he proposed a

policy of industrialization which was intended to create 215,000 new jobs by 1953.<sup>25</sup>

As part of this policy the agricultural land and islands south of Rotterdam were sacrificed in order to make way for the expansion of the harbour, the oil refineries and other industrial concerns. The new complex was one of the most impressive achievements of the new policy, though it had never been the Dutch government's intention to concentrate large-scale industries in a few great cities. On the contrary, the minister in question, who belonged to a grand coalition of Labour, Catholic, Liberal and Protestant parties, promised that the economic modernization would be spread through the provinces. As the rural population also rose sharply the surplus there had to be found employment in new industries. But this solution only gave rise to another problem. As an official report on industrialization explained: 'When a worker moves from the countryside into an industrial centre, he is detached from his environment. If the transition takes place too quickly there could be serious social as well as psychological and moral consequences.'<sup>26</sup> The policy of economic decentralization, which was informed by such sociological considerations, was pursued with limited success in some areas. The development of Emmen from an agricultural village into an industrial town might indeed have served as a model, were it not that this town is now more noted for the number of its idle factories and its high unemployment.

During the late 1940s and 1950s the Netherlands, with its very limited natural resources, had to compete with well-established industrial countries for the restricted post-war market. To consolidate the export trade the Dutch government used every effort to keep down costs. It tried to hold down both wages and, less successfully, consumer prices. State control of wages was accompanied by a steady decrease in the number of working-days lost through strikes. The Communist-dominated *Eenheidsvakcentrale* or EVC (Trade Union Unity Centre) disintegrated after a promising start in 1945 and the other trade unions were in the main content to delegate their function of protecting working-class interests to the Socialist and Catholic coalition government and its parties.

Of the 215,000 proposed new jobs only 100,000 were realized. But the impact of other changes then planned can be clearly seen in the statistics. Between 1947 and 1960 the percentage of the population at work in the agrarian sector fell from 19.3 to 10.7. Among women the

<sup>25</sup> 'Nota houdende nadere gegevens met betrekking tot de industrialisatie in Nederland', *Handelingen der Staten-Generaal*, 1949-50, Tweede Kamer, Bijlagen 1400 ch. X, nr. 18.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

decline was even more striking: from 17.9 per cent to 4.4 per cent. Another change evident from the statistics concerns the advance of urbanization. By 1960 urbanization was proceeding most slowly in the northern provinces and Zeeland, where half the population still lived in rural municipalities. By contrast we are told that 'industrialization had greatly affected a large number of country towns and villages in the southern provinces of Noord-Brabant and Limburg. This region of the country now had one of the highest percentages of the population living in urbanized rural municipalities'.<sup>27</sup> Here we can see the results of a regional policy inaugurated in 1948. The most completely urbanized provinces were in the West, where 80 per cent of the population lived in urban or residential municipalities. The pace of urbanization was accelerating with more progress registered between 1956 and 1960 than between 1947 and 1956.

In the 1950s industrialization was not an economic policy but also a subject for sociological discussion and investigation. After the war the impact of the social sciences was more obvious in several studies that dealt with the effects of a planned industrial expansion. Community development was a theme with many variations as agricultural villages grew into small towns or new housing developments in the towns absorbed both experienced urban inhabitants and residents fresh from the countryside. In the Netherlands the application of sociology was itself affected by the system of *verzuiling*: it was left to the denominations to decide whether the new research institutes should be related to the Dutch Reformed Church or Catholic Church or whether an independent national institute should be established.

Catholic leaders, while recognizing the need for further industrialization, were anxious to ensure that the urbanization and modernization did not occur too rapidly. They remembered not only that the religious loyalty of the new proletariat had been fatally shaken as a result of the first wave of industrialization but also that, when a change had been planned in the mining industry of Limburg in the 1920s, co-operation between the church leaders, trade unions and local authorities had succeeded in preserving to a great extent religious observance among the miners. The advisory board of the archbishopric of Utrecht, a body on which all the Catholic social organizations were represented, discussed the problem and decided to set up special committees whose task was to weigh up the need for regional industrialization against the risks. In order to preserve the character

<sup>27</sup> Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (C.B.S.), *Zeventig jaren statistiek in tijdreeksen 1899-1969* (The Hague, 1970), pp. 54-5; C.B.S., *Typologie van de nederlandse gemeenten naar urbanisatiegraad 31 mei 1960* (Zeist, 1964), pp. 19-20.

of the countryside heavy industries should not be allowed. Married women should not be permitted to work in factories and unmarried young women should be made aware that the industrial environment was not the best preparation for their future vocation as mothers.<sup>28</sup> The Catholic Governor of Limburg declared in 1948 that a healthy, social and moral development would be best guaranteed by providing the workers with their own houses, where they could live quietly in a village or in the countryside, with large enough plots to grow their own potatoes and vegetables and keep a few chickens. In the new towns single family houses should be the rule, but blocks of flats, which were fit only for the elderly and those living alone, were quite unsuitable in Limburg with its many large families.<sup>29</sup> The programme of house building and the social control exercised by the Catholic housing associations on behalf of the miners in south-eastern Limburg clearly demonstrated how effectively Church and State could co-operate in religious and social matters. In 1947 the Governor of Noord-Brabant consulted some experts on a welfare plan for the province. The director of Catholic Action, the priest W. M. Bekkers, who later became bishop, advocated the co-operation of Church and State to maintain the community's morality. No married women should be employed in factories and girls who were employed there should be required to attend domestic courses. Another adviser wanted single-sex factories on the grounds that women and girls who worked together with men, even when set apart, would be conscious of sex throughout the working day.<sup>30</sup>

These pronouncements were made when the changes were still being planned. They influenced the climate of opinion in which the pastoral letter of 1954 was issued. This was at once an exhortation to maintain the unity and integrity of Catholic organizations, despite the fashion for new institutions and the need to adapt to new circumstances, and a warning to remain respectful and obedient towards the Magisterium. In the ensuing public debate the director of the sociological institute of the Catholic Church warned that urbanization in the southern provinces was making the Catholic electorate less inclined to vote for its confessional party in elections. In urban and industrialized communities the 'spiritual decay' was characterized, he feared, by a greater reluctance to attend mass regularly on Sundays

<sup>28</sup> *Verslag industrialisatiedag belegd op initiatief van de aartsdiocesane raad van overleg op 28 november 1947 te Zwolle (s.l., s.a.).*

<sup>29</sup> *De toekomstige industrialisering van Limburg. Economische, sociale, culturele en etische aspecten* (ed. P. J. M. A. H. Houben, Maastricht, 1948), pp. 37-8.

<sup>30</sup> *Prae-adviezen inzake een welvaartsplan voor de provincie Noord-Brabant (s.l., 1947), Part 1, 9-15; 20-3.*

and to vote for the Catholic party on Wednesday – the conventional polling day in the Netherlands.<sup>31</sup> But until the General Election of 1967 the performance of the *Katholieke Volkspartij* (Catholic Peoples Party) at the polls made such fears appear exaggerated. Fear could go hand in hand with political success on account of the continuing unity and control of the Catholic voters and citizens. The system remained largely intact when the economic development of the Netherlands entered the era of mass consumption. According to some economists, who based their analysis on Rostow's theory of economic development, the Dutch economy reached this stage during the 1950s.<sup>32</sup>

## VI

Each of the processes described above – the expansion of Catholic education, the demographic changes and the post-war industrialization of The Netherlands – had its own internal logic. Together they help us to understand the structure and continuity of *verzuijing*. The history of educational expansion among Catholics shows that within the space of only fifty years relations between the traditional *élite* of the clergy and the laity had been completely reversed. But it was the aspirations of organized Catholicism that led to this reversal: the spread of education had been welcomed because it seemed to open the door to intellectual emancipation. The declining birth-rates silently demonstrate that the values within the Catholic community were shifting some decades before the teaching of the Church on contraception became a matter for public debate. It is perhaps less easy to find a direct connexion between industrialization and the erosion of organized Catholicism, nevertheless a link of some sort appears more than likely in the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Limburg. The political decision to foster industrialization had been taken in the first place to meet the needs of a growing population. The Catholic leaders were in sympathy with this policy: at most they expressed some anxiety about the possibly adverse results of modernization. Yet an urbanized and industrialized society formed no part of the heritage from which the Catholic *zuil* derived its values. In the long run the intellectual emanci-

<sup>31</sup> 'Enige aspecten van de religieuze en sociale achtergrond van het Mandement van de nederlandse bisschoppen betreffende "De katholieke in het openbare leven van deze tijd"', *Katholiek Sociaal-Kerkelijk Instituut (KASKI)-memorandum*, VII (The Hague, 1954), 13-4.

<sup>32</sup> J. Pen and P. J. Bouman, 'Een eeuw van toenemende welvaart' in *Drift en koers. Een halve eeuw sociale verandering in Nederland* (ed. A. N. J. den Hollander et al., Assen, 1962), pp. 93-104.

pation and industrialization, embraced by the Catholic movement, provided what might be termed the confessional or denominational road to a secularized society. In this sense the Catholic *zuil* was paradoxically undone by its very success.

The dismantling of the Catholic *zuil's* organizational cohesion defies easy explanation. It is too complex an historical problem to be attributable to a single chain of causality. A fuller treatment of the problem would require consideration of the influence of the new mass-medium of television and the advent of mass consumption as well as the interdependence of the whole system of *verzuiling* in the Netherlands. All these played their part in inducing Catholics to conform more closely to the patterns of behaviour followed by the other groups in Dutch society, or, to put it another way, in bringing about the neutralization of the Catholic *zuil*. It should however be emphasized that this neutralization did not immediately lead to a marked fall in the number of practising Catholics nor the dissolution of the various Catholic organizations. But it did mean the 'privatization of religion' as Catholicism retreated to the home and the Sunday mass. It also led to the decline of Catholicism as a cohesive force in Dutch politics and the secularization of its social organizations.

## 10. 'A Protestant Parliament and a Protestant State': Regional Government and Religious Discrimination in Northern Ireland, 1921-39

P. BUCKLAND

'All that I boast of is that we are a Protestant Parliament and a State'.<sup>1</sup>

This quotation from a parliamentary speech by Northern Ireland's first Prime Minister, James Craig, Viscount Craigavon, sums up the essence of Northern Ireland as it existed between its foundation in June 1921 and the suspension of its parliament in March 1972. Not only were the government and parliament dominated by Protestants, but they were also prone to act in the interests of the Protestant community with scant regard to the claims and susceptibilities of the Catholic minority.

This paper will argue that the development of Northern Ireland as a Protestant state was the inevitable result of the way Ireland was partitioned in 1921, that religious discrimination was the inevitable result of the establishment of a regional government and parliament in the North. In so doing, it will concentrate on the period 1921-39, not simply because this is the only extended period of peace-time government for which the archives are open to researchers, but also because those years were the formative period in the history of Northern Ireland. In these years a pattern of government and politics was established which eventually ended in violence.

The government and parliament of Northern Ireland were set up by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, which partitioned Ireland and established parliaments in each of the two parts – the six counties of Northern Ireland and the twenty-six counties of Southern Ireland. The decision to partition Ireland and to set up two regional parliaments with limited powers of home rule was part of the British plan to withdraw from Ireland as completely as was compatible with imperial interests, while at the same time placating Irish nationalism and yet redeeming pledges to Ulster Unionists that they would not be forced

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates (Commons)*, hereafter cited as *P.D.(C)*, vol. XVI, 24 April 1935, col. 1095.

to accept rule from Dublin. Southern Ireland quickly became independent, achieving dominion status by the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 6 December 1921, and declaring itself a republic in 1949; but throughout, Northern Ireland retained its status under the 1920 Act. It had a parliament and government of its own with powers over such purely local affairs as education, representation, law and order, local government, social services, internal trade, industry and agriculture, but it had limited financial powers and remained an integral part of the United Kingdom, with representation at Westminster, and subject to its ultimate sovereignty.

Not only did Northern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom, it also became the most controversial part. Power in Northern Ireland was in the hands of the Ulster Unionist party, which represented the majority community there, the Protestant community, some two-thirds of the population. The Catholic and nationalist minority, which comprised the remaining one-third, had little influence on government and frequently complained of discrimination not only by the Unionist-controlled regional government, but also by Unionist-controlled local authorities. Many of the charges made against the Unionist regime in Northern Ireland are grossly exaggerated. The regime was neither vindictive nor oppressive, and the Unionist government often tried to moderate the extremism of its supporters. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, in the last analysis, the Unionist government in Northern Ireland did consistently use its power in the interests of the Unionist party, particularly in such sensitive areas as representation, education and, to a lesser extent, law and order.

In matters relating to law and order, a tendency towards discrimination in favour of Protestants and Unionists developed almost accidentally out of the confusion of the early months of 1921-22, when the new government was in danger of dissolving amidst anarchy and the responsibility for law and order was divided between Belfast and Westminster. The result of this confusion was that law enforcement was dominated by narrow policing considerations and by hardliners in the Northern Ireland government who believed that the law should be enforced promptly and vigorously against Catholic and nationalist offenders but with discretion against Protestants and Unionists. This was especially true of the use of special powers, which the government was reluctant to employ against Protestants and Unionists, for, in the view of the permanent head of the Ministry of Home Affairs, it was doubtful whether

it was ever contemplated that these extraordinary powers should be used against those who are loyal to the Crown. If any of the latter class should be

arrested it is a matter for consideration whether the ordinary Law should not be put into force rather than the extraordinary emergency legislation which was passed to deal with disloyal and disaffected persons.<sup>2</sup>

Thus it was that in 1922 the police took less than vigorous action against a Protestant murder gang dedicated to the assassination of Catholics. Instead, an attempt was made to tame the gang by recruiting some its members for intelligence work, and when this experiment failed, full use was not made of special powers to intern suspects or search suspects areas, for, the government's Military Adviser concluded, 'The searching of Protestant quarters has always been a delicate undertaking necessitating special arrangements and selected Personnel to carry it out' so that to take 'any drastic action in loyal areas for the sake of punishing a few rogues might incite an outbreak of outrages on a large scale'.<sup>3</sup> It was not that there was one law for Catholics and another for Protestants. Rather, there was one law, but it was enforced more stringently against Catholics.

On matters relating to education and representation, both local and parliamentary, discrimination became almost an integral part of the policy of the Unionist government. Thus the education laws were amended to make publicly maintained and controlled schools safe for Protestantism. When Northern Ireland's education system had been overhauled in 1923, the intention had been to establish a non-denominational system of public primary education, but such non-sectarianism was unacceptable to both Protestants and Catholics. The latter would under no circumstances submit to public control of their schools, whereas Protestants claimed that they would but on certain conditions. These were denominational control of teaching appointments and compulsory Bible teaching. Such conditions amounted to the virtual endowment of Protestantism by the state and thus contravened the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, which forbade religious endowment and discrimination. Nevertheless, the government eventually gave way to agitation powerfully engineered by the Protestant clergy in co-operation with the Orange Order and amended the education laws in 1925 and 1930. Under the revised regulations, two school systems operated, the clientele of one being Protestant, that of the other being either Protestant or Catholic. In schools controlled by local authorities, attended almost exclusively by Protestant children, all costs were paid out of central and local government funds; whereas the voluntary schools, Catholic and Protestant alike, received most

<sup>2</sup> S. Watt's memo, 5 October 1921, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (P.R.O.N.I.), CAB 6/27.

<sup>3</sup> A. Solly Flood to Watt, 28 September 1922, *ibid.*, CAB 6/30.

but not all their funds from public sources and made up the difference themselves. Had the opportunity of operating publicly maintained schools been open equally to both religious faiths, there would have been nothing inequitable about such an arrangement, but the option was not so open, since the simple Bible teaching, which had to be provided in state schools, was anathema to Catholics.

Indeed, education policy drew from Catholics and nationalists some of their most extravagant denunciations of the government of Northern Ireland. The treatment of Catholic schools was worse than Hitler's treatment of the Jews, said one nationalist leader in 1934, when condemning the amalgamation of boys' and girls' schools; while three years earlier the Cardinal Archbishop of Armagh had declared that the Protestant church in Ireland 'is not even a part of the Church of Christ'.<sup>4</sup> The outlandishness of such outbursts should not obscure the fact that the 1930 Education Act constituted a genuine Catholic grievance. As the Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor argued, this 'unjust and partisan' act, passed 'at the dictation of the Orange Lodges' was

against all principles of justice and equity... We form a large portion of the population, and have more children attending primary elementary schools than any other religious denomination. We ask for no privilege, but we claim equality of treatment with our fellow citizens, and we demand our rights.<sup>5</sup>

While changes in education were designed to make public schools safe for Protestantism, changes in the electoral system were intended to make public bodies safe for Unionism. The most controversial change was the abolition of Proportional Representation (P.R.) in local and parliamentary elections in 1922 and 1929 respectively. P.R. had been introduced into Irish local elections in 1919 and into elections to the Northern Ireland parliament by the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, and had quickly come to be regarded as an invaluable safeguard by minorities in the North, not only Catholics and nationalists but also Independents and supporters of the Labour Party. Unionists, however, were opposed to P.R. not only on principle, but also because of its consequences, since it reduced official Unionist representation on local councils and in parliament. How far the abolition of P.R. assisted the cause of Unionism on public bodies was underlined by the fact that under P.R. nationalists and Labour controlled 24 (32 per cent) of the 75 local public bodies in Northern Ireland, but

<sup>4</sup> *Irish News*, 18 December 1931.

<sup>5</sup> *The Tablet*, 19 November 1932.

after its abolition they controlled only half that number, 12 (or 16 per cent).

Two features of the Unionist government's attitude towards local and parliamentary representation are particularly interesting. The first is the limited horizons and the siege mentality of the government. The chief merit of P.R. is that it encourages and facilitates the widest representation of political opinions, but this was the very opposite to what Ulster Unionists wanted. Their overriding concern was the maintenance of partition and the status of Northern Ireland, and they disliked a system which allowed the return of Independents and Labour members who placed as much emphasis on bread-and-butter issues as on the question of the border, and who might, therefore, mislead electors into voting for a united Ireland. Thus the abolition of P.R. in parliamentary elections was designed to clarify the issue between Unionism and nationalism and, as Craig put it, to get in the Northern Ireland parliament 'men who are for the Union on the one hand or who are against it and who want to go into a Dublin Parliament on the other'.<sup>6</sup>

The second interesting feature of the government's attitude to representation was the way it sought to moderate and make more acceptable the demands of its supporters. If the Unionist rank and file had had their way, there would have been no Catholic, nationalist, Independent or Labour representation on public bodies. They did not care, as one Unionist M.P. frankly declared,

whether there was any Opposition in the House or not. I am glad to see them here, but if they went out of the House today I would have no regrets. I would not care if they never came back again.<sup>7</sup>

The government had to be more circumspect. Force of circumstance, if not generosity of spirit, made ministers aware of the need to reconcile minorities to the regime or at least avoid giving the outside world the impression that it was actively discriminating against minorities. Yet, although the government was less blatant than its supporters, it still sympathized with their aims and so altered local government electoral areas as to give substance to charges of gerrymandering. As the Prime Minister told Londonderry Unionists who in 1936 wanted to shore up their majority on the city council, 'You may rest assured that all of us have the one aim in view, and that is to maintain the integrity of the Maiden City.'<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *P.D.(C.)*, vol. VIII, 25 October 1927, col. 2276.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 October 1927, col. 2353.

<sup>8</sup> Craig to E. S. Murphy, Unionist M.P. for Londonderry City, 15 December 1936, P.R.O.N.I., CAB 9B/13/3.

Such discrimination was the almost inevitable consequence of the establishment of a regional government and parliament in Northern Ireland. Craig's opening speech to parliament in 1921 had promised just and impartial government, but such a development was unlikely for three reasons, two positive and one negative. The divisions in society in Northern Ireland and the nature of government there positively encouraged the adoption of discriminatory policies, while Westminster, the British connexion, did nothing to prevent it.

From the start Northern Ireland was a particularly difficult society to govern. It was, and had long been, a divided society, torn by sectarian conflict between Catholics and Protestants, the clearest manifestation of which had been the conflict over Home Rule in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Catholics in the North had joined with their co-religionists in the rest of Ireland in calling for self-government. On the other hand, Ulster Protestants had formed a Unionist movement to oppose in the most vehement manner possible the claims of Irish nationalism and to ensure that Ireland, or at least some of it, remained part of the United Kingdom.

Despite the taunts of many commentators dismissive of Ulster Unionism, the divisions on the North had deep historical and ideological roots. The six counties had been divided ever since the seventeenth century, for Northern Ireland was carved out of the historic province of Ulster, where the most dramatic battles between Gaelic and Catholic Ireland and Protestant England had been fought out. The last of Ireland's provinces to be conquered, Ulster was the most successfully colonized by the English and Scots, who began to arrive there in any numbers in the early seventeenth century, and who had scarcely been welcomed by the Gaelic Irish deprived of their traditions and often their land. The trouble was that such colonization was not entirely successful, as witnessed by the fact that by the twentieth century only some 57 per cent of Ulstermen were Protestant, and there was a long history of tension between the invaders and the natives. Whereas the Gaelic Irish resented the foreign occupation, the settlers long recalled with bitterness and horror attempts to expel and even massacre them.

Religion as well as history divided Ulstermen. In the North as elsewhere in Ireland, much of life, political and social, revolved round the churches and religious organisations, but such religious socialization divided rather than united Irishmen. As one Belfast Protestant recalled of his childhood in Sandy Row, one of the most 'loyal' areas of the city,

Dozens of churches and mission halls clotted the streets of our neighbour-

hood, and up near the cemetery stood the Mickeys' chapels. Notice boards and wayside pulpits displaying warnings of the 'Wrath to Come' seemed to be more numerous than the sign of the three brass balls. Many more church doors swung open than even jug-and-bottle entrances. But what could be found inside when the doors were opened? Division. All Ireland was divided, the border cut the North from the South, and Mickeys from Protestants, and at the last Day, the goats would be divided from the sheep.<sup>9</sup>

The basis of such division was a fundamental ideological difference between Ulster Protestantism and Irish Catholicism. Since the 1850s Irish Catholicism had been distinguished by a strong ultramontane streak, and from the 1880s it had experienced a new access of enthusiasm and missionary zeal, which emphasised those aspects of Catholicism, such as devotion to the Sacred Heart and Communion, most abhorrent to Protestants. By contrast, Ulster Protestantism, the predominant strain of which was Presbyterianism, was characterized from the 1830s onwards by evangelical fundamentalism, which emphasized the principle of salvation by grace alone, and which regarded the Bible as the Word of God not merely a book about Him. Believing that the soul should be free to commune with its Maker, Evangelical Fundamentalists abhorred Roman Catholicism as illiberal. They regarded Catholics as essentially unfree, since their relationship with God was mediated by a human agency, by the Catholic Church. The Protestant conception of Catholic 'unfreedom' was thus not merely a reference to the empirical authority of the priest; it was a translation of the relationship between God, priest and flock into a more all-embracing context. It endowed priestly authority with a fundamental spiritual significance and consequently with an all-pervasive aspect. Popery is, according to Ulster Protestants, 'something more than a religious system; it is a political system also. It is a religio-political system for the enslavement of the body and soul of man'.<sup>10</sup>

This notion of Catholicism was not confined to the hustings, but was inculcated in young Protestants throughout their schooldays. As our Belfast Protestant recalled,

For one particular crime we would never forgive the Mickeys, their hatred of the Bible. All catholics were under orders, we were told, to burn any scripture they found, especially New Testaments... Crowding out any other aspect of

<sup>9</sup> R. Harbinson, *No Surrender* (London, 1960), p. 54, quoted in F. Wright, 'Protestant Ideology and Politics in Ulster', *European Journal of Sociology*, XIV (1973), 245.

<sup>10</sup> William Johnston, a leading Belfast Orangeman and M.P., *Belfast Newsletter*, 15 May 1861, quoted in Wright, *ibid.*, 224.

History, our schools dinned into us over and over again the Protestant Story. On leaving school... I had no notion of the world's past other than a few prehistoric tales and dreary details concerning our protestant faith and the unrelieved darkness of Rome... And yet in spite of such an entrenched opinion our ignorance of the catholic world was profound. I, for instance, believed that Mickeys existed only in parts of Belfast and nowhere else except the Free State and Rome itself.<sup>11</sup>

This is not to suggest either that Ulster Protestantism was monolithic or that Protestants and Catholics were constantly at each other's throats. Ulster Protestants were divided not only into different denominations, the three main ones being Presbyterian, Church of Ireland and Methodists, but also into different socio-economic groups, between whom there was often considerable antagonism. In addition, many social mechanisms had been developed, especially in rural areas, to permit peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation between Protestants and Catholics.

Nevertheless, the qualifications do not alter the facts that opinion in Northern Ireland was polarized on broad religious lines and that the fundamental nature of this division between Protestants and Catholics meant that society was always in a state of potential conflict. Matters affecting religion, and nearly all questions could be brought back to religion, were capable of arousing bitter political controversy. Indeed, social psychologists might argue that such conflict was the more intense and irrational because of the very divisions among Protestants. As one political scientist has recently remarked, 'It is because Protestant distrusts Protestant, not just because Protestant distrusts Catholic, that the Ulster conflict is so intense'.<sup>12</sup>

It is because all issues can be brought back to the religious question that all forms of discrimination in Northern Ireland were forms of religious discrimination. It might be maintained that discrimination in respect of representation on public bodies was more a matter of political rather than religious ideology, a question of Unionism versus nationalism rather than Protestantism versus Catholicism. Yet most Ulstermen would have agreed with the nationalist leader, Joe Devlin, when he persisted in speaking about parliamentary representation in religious terms. Thus, when parliamentary seats were redistributed in 1929 following the abolition of P.R., Devlin unsuccessfully maintain-

<sup>11</sup> Harbinson, *No Surrender*, pp. 120-1, 131-2, quoted in Wright, *ibid.*, 245.

<sup>12</sup> J. Whyte, 'Interpretations of the Northern Ireland Problem: an Appraisal', unpublished paper presented to a seminar on the interpretations of the Northern Ireland problem held at the Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University, Belfast, 29 October 1977, p. 26.

ed that the Catholic minority in County Antrim should be given a representative of their own, for they had

educational interests involved where they have all the county boards against them... they need a Member to whom they can speak, because if they are dealing with matters germane either to religion or charity they want to go to a man of their own class, of their own persuasion, of their own feeling, who is instinct with that feeling.<sup>13</sup>

It was Northern Ireland's misfortune that the regional government set up in 1921 was in no position to handle the problems presented by such a divided society – the second reason why regional government meant religious discrimination there. The plain truth was the Ulster Unionists were not politically mature enough to accept the responsibility that had been thrust upon them. The whole structure and ethos of Ulster Unionism had been based upon a single objective – determined opposition to Home Rule – and no constructive philosophy had been developed over the years of struggle to equip Ulster Unionists to govern a state they had neither expected nor wanted. Members of the new regional government were themselves drawn from the Ulster Protestant community, and had been intimately associated with Ulster Unionist resistance to Home Rule. They thus shared all the fears and prejudices of the Protestant and Unionist community. It is true that the experience of governing did develop in ministers a broader perspective and a new sense of responsibility, but these were insufficient to help them develop policies in the interests of the community as a whole. On the contrary, two factors encouraged the government to use what powers it had in the interests of its Protestant and Unionist supporters.

Firstly, Northern Ireland was a small and highly-localized society, with a population of some 1¼ million in an area the size of Yorkshire. It was a place where everybody knew everybody else's business, and government ministers could not distance themselves from their supporters. They were far too accessible and could always be sharply reminded of the claims and narrow horizons of their supporters, whether they were attending church twice on Sundays or whether they were attending Orange Day demonstrations. Thus in June 1925, during one of the recurrent and successful clerical-Orange educational campaigns, the Minister of Labour, John Miller Andrews, reported to the Prime Minister that

<sup>13</sup> *P.D.(C.)*, vol. X, 21 March 1929, col. 1147.

Already the Protestant pulpits are being used for defending what is called 'Protestant rights'. I had myself to listen to two lengthy harangues on the subject on Sunday last in Little's church at Castlereagh. The Orange order are working in co-operation with the churches, and I am afraid that the position will be difficult on the 12th July unless something is done.

Needless to say, something was done.

This accessibility, even claustrophobia, intimidated ministers and inhibited them from taking any steps which would be unpopular with their supporters, especially on matters relating to religion and the constitution. As the Minister of Home Affairs, Sir Richard Dawson Bates, commented in 1923, when rejecting a plea by the British government for clemency in the treatment of nationalist political prisoners, what could be done in Britain could less readily be done in Northern Ireland. Ulster, he maintained,

was in a different position from Great Britain, inasmuch as in a comparatively small community such as North Ireland every action of the Government was scrutinised by the whole of the population.<sup>15</sup>

It was not only the claustrophobic nature of society that caused ministers to pander to the baser desires of their supporters. The limited powers of the government also had the same effect. Although the government bore formal responsibility for large areas of social, economic and political life, its real power was limited by constitutional restrictions and economic realities. For instance, it was responsible for trade and industry in a severely depressed region, which came to have the highest rate of unemployment in the United Kingdom, owing to the decline of such old staple industries as linen and shipbuilding and to the economic policies pursued by governments in the South of Ireland. Yet it could do little to alleviate the resultant distress. On the one hand, its power of economic and financial manipulation were limited by the terms of the 1920 act, which reserved major fiscal powers to Westminster. On the other hand, Northern Ireland's potential for economic growth was limited by severe natural disadvantages, particularly its shortage of raw materials and its distance from mass markets.

This impotence caused considerable unrest among government supporters, especially when it could be contrasted with the apparent energy with which the Southern government was trying to encourage trade and industry. Thus, according to the Lord Mayor of Londond-

<sup>14</sup> Andrew to Craig, 17 June 1925, P.R.O.N.I., CAB 9D/1/5.

<sup>15</sup> Cabinet Conclusions, 19 January 1923, *ibid.*, CAB 4/69/19.

erry in 1926, the government's inability to safeguard the city's trade against the consequences of Southern protectionist policies was

making loyalists feel 'What is the use of staying under a Government that either don't care a d--n for our interests, or at any rate can't protect them.'<sup>16</sup>

In these circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that the Unionist government in Northern Ireland took advantage of what few real powers it possessed and used them in the interests of its Protestant and Unionist supporters. It might not be able to cut the rate of unemployment, but at least it could cater for the claims of Protestant educational theories. It might not be able to safeguard the trade of Londonderry, but it could at least ensure that Unionists remained in control of the city council.

While the nature of society and government in Northern Ireland fostered discrimination, the existence of the British connexion did nothing to prevent it. In theory, Westminster could have prevented the adoption of discriminatory policies in Northern Ireland and could have taken steps to ensure that policies on such sensitive issues as education, representation and law and order were developed in the interests of the community as a whole, Catholics and Protestants alike. Ultimate sovereignty was reserved to Westminster and the legitimacy of any legislation could be tested by the judicial committee of the Privy Council. Yet successive Westminster governments failed to take advantage of such powers, even when, as with the education acts of 1925 and 1930, there was an apparent breach of the provisions of the 1920 act forbidding religious discrimination and the endowment of any religious denomination. All that Westminster would do was to have a quiet word with Northern Ireland ministers and officials, but it would not veto controversial legislation.

The reason for this passivity at Westminster is not hard to find. It was not so much the result of traditional British reverence for the sanctity of the rights of parliaments; rather it was a recognition of harsh political realities. The fact was there was an in-built Unionist majority in Northern Ireland, and thus there was no alternative government to take office, should the Unionist government resign in protest against the exercise of Westminster's sovereignty. Only once did Westminster threaten to veto a controversial measure, the Local Government Bill of 1922 abolishing P.R. in local elections; and the reaction of the government of Northern Ireland had been swift and

<sup>16</sup> M. Scott Moore to C. Blackmore, Cabinet Secretary, 27 March 1926, *ibid.*, CAB 9R/57/1.

uncompromising. It would resign and hold a general election on the issue, at which it would be returned with an overwhelming majority, thus leaving Westminster with two equally unpalatable alternatives: to climb down, or to assume once more direct responsibility for the government of a part of Ireland – the very thing that the 1920 act had been designed to avoid. It was an instructive episode, which starkly underlined the limits of central control over the regional government. Westminster was both unwilling and unable to correct the development of discriminatory policies in Northern Ireland.

Discrimination was, then, the inevitable consequence of the establishment of a regional government in Northern Ireland. This does not mean that the partition of Ireland was itself wrong. On the contrary, partition was the only way of reconciling the counter-claims of Irish nationalism and Ulster Unionism in the early twentieth century, the only way of reconciling the aspirations of Irish nationalists with the apprehension of Ulster Unionists. Irishmen were divided before partition. Partition was a recognition of this division. What was wrong with the 1920 settlement was the decision to establish a separate parliament and government in Northern Ireland, instead of simply continuing direct British rule there. Even in 1920 it would have been possible to have foreseen the problems likely to be created by handing over power in Northern Ireland to a Unionist government with control over such sensitive issues as law and order, education and representation, but British policy towards Ireland has never been distinguished for foresight and imagination. Indeed, the existence of discrimination in Northern Ireland provides not only an indictment of British policy but also an argument against the whole concept of parliamentary devolution in the United Kingdom.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> For a fuller discussion of the operation of devolved government in Northern Ireland, see P. Buckland, *'Factory of Grievance': Devolved Government in Northern Ireland, 1921-39* (Dublin and New York, 1979).

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